



RELIGIOUS LIFE IN ANCIENT INDIA

Edited by
D. C. SIRCAR



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UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA
1972

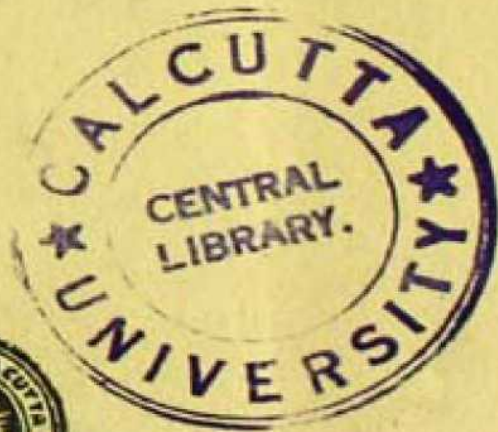


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D. C. SIRCAR

*Carmichael Professor and Head of the Department of
Ancient Indian History and Culture,
University of Calcutta.*



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ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE
UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA
LECTURES AND SEMINARS
No. VII-B (SEMINARS)
PART I**

CONTENTS

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Page</i>
Proceedings of the Seminar—First Day	1
1. Opposition to Rituals in the R̥gveda <i>by</i> Sri R. K. Bhattacharya, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC, Calcutta University ...	10
2. Importance of Sāman in the Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa <i>by</i> Sri B. P. Mishra, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC, Calcutta University	14
3. Magic and Miracle in Buddhism <i>by</i> Sm. S. Sengupta, Delhi University.	22
4. Buddhist Pavāraṇā and its Observance in Japan <i>by</i> Sm. S. Sengupta, Delhi University.	31
5. Buddhist Ceremonies <i>by</i> Dr. Sm. K. Saha, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC, Calcutta University.	39
6. Religious Festivals of Ancient India <i>by</i> Dr. A. K. Chatterjee, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC, Calcutta University. ...	46
7. The Role of Atheism in Indian Thought <i>by</i> Dr. N. N. Bhatta- charya, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC, Calcutta University.	57
8. Some Aspects of Religious Beliefs and Practices in Ancient India <i>by</i> Dr. B. Chatterjee, Burdwan University. ...	65
9. Guardians of the Quarters <i>by</i> Prof. D. C. Sircar, Calcutta University.	72
10. Circumcision in Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra <i>by</i> Sri R. P. Majumdar, Calcutta.	81
11. Hindu Religion as Reflected in Gupta Coins <i>by</i> Dr. S. K. Maity, Jadavpur University.	82
12. Gajalakṣmī on Early Indian Coins <i>by</i> Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay, Calcutta University.	91
13. Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava <i>by</i> Dr. Sm. J. Maitra, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC, Calcutta University.	94
14. Religious Life as Represented in a Sculpture of Konarak <i>by</i> Sri K. S. Behera, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar. ...	101
15. Lakṣmī in Śrīvaiṣṇava Theology <i>by</i> Sri R. K. Billorey, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC, Calcutta University. ...	110
16. Tāntric Cult in Eastern India <i>by</i> Prof. U. Thakur, Magadh University, Bodhgaya.	112

SUPPLEMENT

17. Links between Early and Later Buddhist Mythology <i>by</i> Dr. J. R. Haldar, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC, Calcutta University.	122
INDEX	159



PREFACE

The seventh series of two days' inter-university seminars was held at our Centre of Advanced Study in February, 1971, on (1) Religious Life in Ancient India, and (2) Early Indian Political and Administrative Systems. The proceedings of the first day's seminar on Religious Life, together with the papers presented on the occasion, are now placed in the hands of the students of ancient Indian history.

The proceedings have been drawn up, as usual, on the notes submitted by the Reporters. Dr. A. K. Chatterjee and Sri R. K. Billorey have rendered me some help in the work of editing them. The papers, edited without changing the authors' ideas, have been roughly arranged on a chronological basis.

The index of this volume has been prepared by Dr. Sm. J. Maitra.

Centre of Advanced Study, Dept. of
Ancient Indian History and Culture,
Calcutta University, 51/2, Hazra Road,
Calcutta-19. 29th January, 1972.

D. C. SIRCAR
Director

Proceedings of the Seminar

First Day

Date : 25th February, 1971.

Time : 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. and 2-30 P.M. to 5 P.M.

Subject : Religious Life in Ancient India.

Place : Lecture Hall, Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University.

Chairman : PROF. D.C. SIRCAR, Calcutta University.

Participants besides the Chairman :

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. DR. O. P. VERMA | Nagpur University |
| 2. SM. S. SENGUPTA | Delhi University |
| 3. DR. D. K. GANGULY | Visva-Bharati University,
Santiniketan |
| 4. DR. SM. B. LAHIRI | Jadavpur University |
| 5. DR. B. CHATTERJEE | Burdwan University |
| 6. DR. S. BANDYOPADHYAY | Calcutta University |
| 7. SRI R.K. BHATTACHARYA | Centre of Advanced Study in
AIHC, Calcutta University |
| 8. DR. SM. K. SAHA | Do. |
| 9. DR. N.N. BHATTACHARYA | Do. |
| 10. DR. A. K. CHATTERJEE | Do. |
| 11. DR. SM. J. MAITRA | Do. |
| 12. SRI B. P. MISHRA | Do. |
| 13. SRI J. R. HALDAR | Do. |
| 14. SRI R. K. BILLOREY | Student of the Dept. of AIHC,
Calcutta University |
| 15. SRI R. P. MAJUMDAR | Calcutta |

and others

Reporters : DR. S. P. SINGH
SRI B. P. MISHRA
SM. K. BAJPEYI

Morning Session

The Seminar started at 10 A.M. when Prof. D. C. Sircar extended welcome to all the scholars assembled, especially to the representatives of universities other than Calcutta. He referred to the abnormal situation in the city, which discouraged scholars from other parts of the country to attend the seminars and particularly thanked the representatives of the Delhi and Nagpur universities. He also requested the representatives of other universities to forgive any lapses on the part of the organisers of the seminars.

Prof. Sircar then requested Sm. S. Sengupta to read her paper entitled 'Buddhist Pavāraṇā and its Observance in Japan'. Sm. Sengupta tried to show how this ceremony has been modified in Japan where it has been mixed up with the old ancestor-worship of Shintoism.

In reply to a question of Sri R. K. Bhattacharya, Sm. Sengupta mentioned the *Avalambana Sūtra* which speaks of the ceremony. To a query of Dr. O. P. Verma, she replied that Pavāraṇā was observed by the Buddhists after the rains and one of the features of the ceremony was a feast given to the monks. Prof. Sircar was inquisitive about the meaning of the word *Pavāraṇā*. Sm. Sengupta thought that it may have been so called because the monks changed robes (*pāvāra*) during the ceremony after *vassā-vāsa*.^{*} On the question of the start of *vassā-vāsa* on the day following the full moon of Aṣāḍha or Śrāvaṇa, Prof. Sircar observed that India is a vast country so that the *vassā* (rainy season) of four months may not have commenced at the same time in different places.

Dr. N. N. Bhattacharya then read his paper on 'The Role of Atheism in India' in which he tried to show the predominant position of the atheistic philosophy among the philosophies of India. He also expressed the view that most of the major

^{*}[The word may be related to Pali *pavāreti* meaning 'to give a person his choice, to invite, to offer'.—Ed.]

philosophical schools of India were in some way or other affected by the teachings of Cārvāka. Sri R. K. Bhattacharya referred to an article published in the Bengali periodical *Viśvavāṇī* in which similar views have been put forward. Dr. A. K. Chatterjee pointed out that all the six major philosophical schools of India accept the Veda as the supreme authority and that they cannot be connected with the Lokāyata school of thought. Prof. Sircar considered Dr. Bhattacharya's opinion as an unwarranted exaggeration of the importance of atheism and asked him if he regarded the philosophy of the Vaiṣṇava schools as atheistic in nature. Dr. Chatterjee remarked that the Vaiṣṇava philosophy is based on the Upaniṣads and the *Gītā* and has little to do with the *nāstika* doctrine. Dr. Bhattacharya thought that all the Upaniṣads do not believe in the existence of God. Dr. O. P. Verma was not convinced with Dr. Bhattacharya's arguments and regarded his views as conflicting. Dr. S. K. Mitra, Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay and Sri B. P. Mishra were also inclined to disagree with Dr. Bhattacharya.

Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay read his note on Gajalakṣmī on early Indian coins, in which he commented on the statement of Dr. Sm. B. Lahiri that the Gajalakṣmī device does not appear on Indian coins after the first century A. D. In this connection, Dr. Bandyopadhyay referred to the gold coins of Śaśāṅka and Jaya and also to some Śātavāhana coins on all of which the figure of Gajalakṣmī appears. Sri A. K. Chakravarti and Dr. S. K. Mitra expressed the opinion that Dr. Bandyopadhyay's note had little to do with the day's seminar which was on religious life. Prof. Sircar, however, felt that the appearance of the deity called Gajalakṣmī on early Indian coins has some relevance to the subject of the seminar. He also observed that the popularity of Gajalakṣmī is indicated by her appearance not only on some coins, but also on a large number of clay seals of the Gupta age and also on the seals attached to copper-plate grants of the Gupta and post-Gupta periods. Dr. A. N. Lahiri observed that Śaśāṅka's coins

bearing Gajalakṣmī have not yet been published. Dr. Sm. B. Lahiri thanked Dr. Bandyopadhyay for drawing her attention to the coins bearing the Gajalakṣmī figure and belonging to dates later than the first century A. D.

Dr. B. Chatterjee read his paper entitled 'Some Aspects of Religious Beliefs and Practices in Ancient India' in which he discussed Indian ideas about heaven, hell, vice, virtue, *ahimsā*, etc. He also quoted from Sanskrit works to show the nature of ancient Indian religion and referred to the part played by the Bhakti cult. Sri B. P. Mishra felt that Dr. Chatterjee should have referred to various Vedic beliefs and practices in his paper, while Dr. D. K. Ganguly pointed out that Dr. Chatterjee had failed to maintain a chronological order in his discussion. Prof. Sircar observed that Dr. Chatterjee discussed a vast subject in a short note and could not therefore do proper justice to it. He further pointed out that discussions on the various aspects of ancient Indian beliefs and practices are bound to be more or less theoretical as conflicting statements on particular topics are found in ancient and mediaeval works. He pointed out how the Indian householders supported the monks belonging to various religious orders.

Dr. Sm. K. Saha then read a paper on 'Buddhist Ceremonies' in which she discussed such important ceremonies as Pabbajjā, Uposatha, Vassāvāsa and Pavāraṇā. Prof. Sircar observed that Dr. Sm. Saha deals only with certain ceremonies of the Pali Canon and that a more suitable title of her note would have been 'Some Early Buddhist Ceremonies'. Dr. D. R. Das said that popular Buddhist rites should also have been included in the paper. Sm. S. Sengupta pointed out that the Uposatha was observed even during the Buddha's life time. She referred to the Pātimokkha rules and requested Dr. Sm. Saha to make a comparative study of the Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist ceremonies. Sri B. P. Mishra pointed out that Darśa and Paurṇamāsa, referred to by Dr. Sm. Saha, were Vedic sacrifices. Sm. Sengupta said that most of the Buddhist ceremonies were adopted from the Brāhmaṇical Hindus.

Sri R. K. Bhattacharya next read his note entitled 'Opposition to Rituals in the *Rgveda*' in which he said that a section of the *Rgvedic* Aryans had atheistic leanings and raised their voice against Vedic rituals most of which were costly and elaborate affairs. He did not agree with those who believe that only the Nonaryans were opposed to the Vedic practices. Dr. S. K. Mitra complained that Sri Bhattacharya did not make it clear whether the Dasyus and Dāsas mentioned in the *Rgveda* were opposed to the Aryans or the Vedic rituals. Sri Bhattacharya replied that they were opposed to both the Aryans and Nonaryans. Dr. A. K. Chatterjee observed that Sri Bhattacharya did not notice the different meanings of the term *asura* as found in the *Rgveda*. Prof. Sircar was doubtful whether a section of the Aryans had become opposed to Aryans or Vedic rituals at such an early date. Dr. D. K. Ganguly and Sri B. P. Mishra also took part in the discussion on Sri Bhattacharya's paper, Sri Mishra referring to the two meanings of *asura*, viz. *asu-ra* and *a-sura*.

Dr. Sm. J. Maitra next read her paper on Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava, in which she discussed the composite conception of the gods Mārtaṇḍa (i.e. Sūrya) and Bhairava (i.e. Rudra-Śiva). Prof. Sircar pointed out that the Liṅga called Mihireśvara, as referred to by Dr. Sm. Maitra, was not a composite image of Mihira (Sun) and Īśvara (Śiva), but was named after the queen Mihiralakṣmī who founded the image. He further referred to the Tripuruṣa image in which sometimes Sūrya-Viṣṇu is combined with Śiva and Brahman. Sm. B. Chatterjee thought that the paper was not suited to the seminar. Prof. Sircar, however, did not agree with the view. Dr. D. R. Das then referred to some composite images discussed by Sankalia, J. N. Banerjea and others. Sri B. P. Mishra was of the opinion that Agni and the Sun are identical in the Vedic texts as Agni is the form of the Sun on the earth while the Sun is the form of Agni in the heaven. Prof. Sircar observed that, in the mediaeval period, Sūrya and Śiva were not identified and their combination is also rather rare. Sri Mishra said that the *Ādityahṛdaya* in the

Rāmāyaṇa, VI, identifies Sūrya with most of the gods; but Prof. Sircar did not attach any importance to theoretical identifications as noticed in the *śatanāma-sahasranāma* lists.

The Morning Session ended at 1-00 P.M.

Afternoon Session

After lunch the Afternoon Session started at 2-30 P.M. when Sm. S. Sengupta was invited by Prof. Sircar to read her second paper entitled 'Magic and Miracles in Buddhism'. She pointed out how, like the Brāhmaṇas, the Buddhist monks also believed in the efficacy of magical practices and how early Buddhist literature represents the Buddha as condemning magical practices and also as performing miracles.

Sri R. K. Bhattacharya referred to the *Buddhacarita* in which the Buddha is depicted as performing miraculous deeds. Sm. Sengupta said that there is some contradiction in Buddhist texts regarding the Buddha's attitude towards magic and miracles as already pointed out by her. Prof. Sircar observed that, as a great rationalist, the Buddha could hardly have been a believer in miracles; but miraculous deeds are attributed to great personalities like the Buddha in the course of time as legends begin to develop around their names. Thus, even though the Buddha did not say anything on God, he himself later came to be worshipped by the people as God and the Hindus adopted him as one of the ten incarnations of their great god Viṣṇu. Prof. Sircar pointed out that, viewed at from this angle, even the earliest works of Canonical literature attributing miracles to the Buddha must be assigned to a later date when the Buddha saga had already developed. Dr. Verma also agreed with the view. Sm. Sengupta drew attention to early Indian sculptures representing the Buddha's miracles. In the course of the discussion, Dr. A. K. Chatterjee opined that the Pali Canon is older than the Aśokan inscriptions. Prof. Sircar did not agree with this view.

Sri B. P. Mishra then read his paper entitled 'The Importance of Sāmans in the *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*' in which he tried to show that, unlike the other Vedic texts, the *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*, attaches great importance to the Sāmans which are believed to be superior even to Indra or Prajāpati. And the reason, according to him, is that the said Brāhmaṇa belonged to the *Sāmaveda* which emphasises the singing of *mantras*. Sri R. K. Bhattacharya quoted the *Manusmṛti* to show that the *Sāmaveda* occupied a secondary position. Sri Mishra replied that the importance of the Sāmans is recognised even in the *Rgveda*. Prof. Sircar referred to the *Gītā* which regards the *Sāmaveda* as the foremost of the Vedas. There was some discussion on the meaning of the word *sāman* and the purpose for which they were sung. Sri R. P. Majumdar thought that the meaning of the word cannot be satisfactorily determined.

Dr. A. K. Chatterjee read his paper entitled 'Religious Festivals in Ancient India' in which he discussed the various religious festivals mentioned in the Vedic, epic, Buddhist and Classical Sanskrit texts. In reply to a question from Sri B. P. Mishra, Dr. Chatterjee said that *Pitṛmedha* is a sort of sacrifice and not a festival. Sri Mishra then observed that *Indramaha*, mentioned by Dr. Chatterjee, was not originally a festival as *maha* means *yajña*, i.e. sacrifice. Sri R. K. Bhattacharya regarded both *Indramaha* and *Pitṛmedha* as festivals. Prof. Sircar felt that the subject was vast and one can hardly do justice to such a subject in a few pages. He further drew attention to the various kinds of *maṅgalas* or popular rites mentioned in Aśokan inscriptions. Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay thought that Dr. Chatterjee should have taken note of the published writings on the subject.

Sri J. R. Haldar then read his paper entitled 'Some Connections between Early and Later Buddhist Mythology'. He observed that, although there is a great difference between the two, later Buddhist mythology has its root in the early Buddhist texts. Sri B. P. Mishra observed that the 'strides' of the Buddha are reminiscent of Viṣṇu's strides mentioned in the

Rgveda. Sri Haldar said that *vajra* was void or *śūnyatā*. Sm. S. Sengupta observed that *vajra* means diamond in early Buddhist literature. Prof. Sircar said that in Sanskrit also the word generally means a diamond.

Prof. D.C. Sircar read a paper entitled 'The Guardians of the Quarters' in which he discussed the development of the conception of Dikpālas or Lokapālas and showed how, in course of time, the number of Dikpālas was raised from four to eight and finally to ten. He pointed out that three of the four Buddhist Lokapālas were different from their Brāhmaṇical counterparts and that even the Brāhmaṇical list was not uniform. Dr. O. P. Verma wanted to know why the number of the Lokapālas was later raised. Prof. Sircar pointed out that the original conception was of guardians of the four cardinal points, to which later the four intermediate directions and finally the zenith and nadir were added. Dr. A. K. Chatterjee observed that, as the dates of very few ancient Indian works and authors are correctly known, Prof. Sircar should use the term 'approximate' in their connection. Dr. A. N. Lahiri wanted to know the date of the beginning of the conception of ten Dikpālas. Prof. Sircar replied that the idea of ten Dikpālas is mediaeval. Dr. D. R. Das said that the idea of four guardian deities occurs in the *Arthaśāstra*. Prof. Sircar disagreed. He said that the word *digdevatā* is different from *Dikpāla* or *Lokapāla*. Dr. A. K. Chatterjee said that the word *Lokapāla* occurs in the *Lalitavistara*. Prof. Sircar said that the date of that work is much later than that of the Nanaghat inscription of the first century B.C., which mentions the four Lokapālas Yama, Varuṇa, Kubera and Vāsava. Dr. D. R. Das referred to the female forms of Dikpālas found in the mediaeval temple of Kheḍ Brahṁā. Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay referred to the early Dikpāla images having four hands and later images having two hands. The difference was explained by Dr. D. R. Das as due to the difference in the Śilpaśāstra prescriptions, while Prof. Sircar did not rule out the individuality of the artists.

Sri R. P. Majumdar read the paper entitled 'Trace of

Liṅgakarṇavedha in the *Kāmasūtra*' in which he endeavoured to show that the ancient Indians practised circumcision like the Jews and Muslims. Prof. Sircar pointed out that the practice involved the piercing or slitting of the *bahiś-carma* and not cutting it off as in Muslim circumcision.

The last paper entitled 'Lakṣmī in Śrivaishṇava Theology' was read by Sri R. K. Billorey. The author stressed the pre-eminent position of Lakṣmī in the philosophy of the Śrivaishnavas and said that they regard the goddess as the Supreme Mother. Prof. Sircar considered it to be an interesting aspect of the Indian Mother Goddess cult.

Prof. Sircar then thanked the scholars participating in the seminar for the success of the day's transaction, and the Afternoon Session ended at 5 p.m.

I

OPPOSITION TO RITUALS IN THE *RGVEDA*

R. K. Bhattacharya, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC,
Calcutta University

There are references to some tribes, clans, or groups of people who were in the habit of opposing the Vedic Aryans in the performance of their rituals. According to the popular view, these opponents belonged to some Nonaryan tribes who were driven out from their ancestral habitats by the Aryan conquerors. On the other hand, according to the orthodox view, the Aryans did not come to India from any foreign land and never drove out any particular tribe or clan from their Indian home. Whether the Aryans were an indigenous people of India or came from any foreign land, the *Rgveda* mentions their innumerable enemies, most of whom disliked their religious festivities. If these enemies of the Aryans, especially those who caused obstructions to the Vedic rituals, belonged to the Nonaryan tribes only, or if they had amongst them even a section of the Aryans as well, should be ascertained after a thorough examination.

The seers of the *Rgveda* were afraid of the enemies whom they hated, and for whose destruction, or at least removal from the land, they prayed to their divinities over and over again. The terms used in the *Rgveda* for these enemies are mainly *yātudhāna*, *yātudhānī*, *rakṣas* and *asura*. Side by side with the religious-minded Aryans, they flourished with vigour, enthusiasm and success. It appears from the *Rgveda* that, on many occasions, the pious and harmless ritualists were driven away from the venue of their sacred activities, and many of them were massacred by the said atheists.

One should ponder over the point as to why such obstructions were created by some people, especially on the occasions of rituals. It is evident from the Vedic texts that the rituals of the Vedic Aryans was the greatest of their public functions,

in which immense quantity of food, drink, and other things were gathered at particular places. Of course, everybody present on the occasion would get a portion of the food. It also appears that the habitual sinners, who were notorious for their antisocial activities, were not allowed to attend the rituals, because either they had unclean body and dirty clothes which would pollute the sanctity of the ritual, or they had the nasty habit of stealing away some sacrificial offerings. Most of these sinners belonged to the Nonaryan people, no doubt ; but a section of them appears to have come from the Aryans themselves.*

The *Ṛgveda* shows that some of the atheists, who were in the habit of destroying the Vedic rituals, had reddish complexion (*piṣaṅga-bhr̥ṣṭi*) and evil nature (*piśāci*) ; cf.

piṣaṅgabhr̥ṣṭim=ambhr̥ṇam piśācim=Indra sam mṛṇa sarvaṁ rakṣo nibarhaya (I.133.5).

We know that it was the Aryan people only, and no other indigenous tribes or clans, who had the reddish complexion. Even in the *Purāṇas* and the epics, the Kṣatriya community of the Aryans is said to have red complexion. The aforesaid verse of the *Ṛgveda*, therefore, indicates that at least a group of the Aryans themselves turned atheists and used to destroy their rituals, to rob their wealth including those gathered at the venue of sacrifices, and even to kill those ritualists who ventured to oppose the robbers.

It is noticeable that the term used in the above verse for the oppressors is *rakṣas* which is derived from the root *rakṣ* (to protect). The derivative meaning of this term indicates that originally it indicated a section of people entrusted with the responsibility of protecting the peace-loving religious-minded ritualists and other people of their type. Apparently, with the passing of time, the protectors, who were naturally brave, strongly built, and skilful in war, became greedy, and

*[Cf. the well-known theory regarding the Inner and Outer Bands of the Indo-Aryan people. See R. P. Chanda, *The Indo-Aryan Races*, Chap. II.—Ed.]

used to rob the wealth of the very people whose protection was their duty. As such oppressions increased day by day, the leaders of the Aryan society formed a new class of people for their protection, to whom the new name Kṣatra or Kṣatriya was given. This apparently they did for distinguishing the later protectors from the misguided original ones.*

The existence of a section of people who neither believed in the existence of Indra, the presiding deity of the Vedic rituals, nor in heaven where he is said to have his abode, is mentioned in the *Rgveda* (11.12.5). In VIII. 103.3, the Fire-god has been invoked to help the ritualists with animals and other types of wealth, as such things of theirs were often stolen away by the atheists, while in VII. 104.24 the ritualists pray to Indra for destroying their harassers who consisted not only of males, but also of females. In the same verse, the expression *mūra-devāḥ* is explained by Sāyaṇa as 'demons', whereas, according to some other scholars, it stands for the images of deities.¹ If the latter meaning is accepted, then the verse shows that prayer has been made to Indra for killing those anti-religious people who used to cut off the heads of images. Whatever may be the case, the existence of atheists who terrorised the Vedic ritualists is proved beyond doubt. There are also many other verses in the *Rgveda* which prove this fact.

In different verses the oppressors of the ritualists are called *yātudhāna* which literally means 'he who causes troubles'.² In I.35.10, Indra is invoked for crushing the Yātudhānas, while in X. 87.10, 13-14, the same prayer has been made to the Fire-god. The term *yātudhāna* in the sense of 'oppressor' is used in many other verses, e.g., VII.19.8; VIII.50.20; X.118.8, 16, etc. In I.191.8, X.118.8, etc., the Sun, Fire, and some

*[We are inclined to disagree with the above views.—Ed.]

1 J. N. Banerjea, *Paurāṇic and Tāntric Religion*, p. 3. [Really, as Banerjea says, according to Sāyaṇa, 'the Rākṣasas engaged in destructive actions', but 'worshippers of false gods' or 'worshippers of images' according to some.—Ed.]

2 Cf. *yātur*=*yātanā pīḍā. tadvatām yātudhānānām*—Sāyaṇa on *RV*, VIII.60.20.

other deities are invoked for destroying the Yātudhānīs or female oppressors, who also were dangerous enemies to the rituals and ritualists.

In many other verses of the *Ṛgveda*, the harassers of the ritualists are termed as *rakṣas*, and prayers are made to Indra, Agni, Soma and others for driving out these enemies from the venue of rituals and also for destroying them. Cf. I. 21.5 ; 86.9 ; 133.5 ; III.30.15-16 ; IV.4.14 ; VI.18.10 ; VII.104.1, 4, 13, 22, 25 ; VIII.6 ; 73.5 ; IX.1.2, 15-16 ; 67.20 ; X.87.10-14 ; 89.14 ; 118.7 ; 152.3 ; etc.

The term *rakṣas* gradually changed its meaning and was used to mean any type of oppressors, antagonistic to the Vedic rituals. We know from the *Ṛgveda* (VII.104.22) that the Rakṣas were divided into different groups, tribes, or clans, having a separate banner for each of them. Some of them had their banner marked with the representation of an owl, others with that of a dolphin or an offspring of an owl, and the rest either with the figure of a dog, or with that of an eagle or vulture. All the said groups, tribes or clans were extremely dangerous to the ritualists, and as such, the latter prayed to Indra for destroying them.

From the *Ṛgveda* (I.104.23), we know that the said oppressors sometimes were in the habit of surrounding the ritualists, and destroying their rituals, causing unbearable troubles to them. Apparently on such occasions, they murdered most of the ritualists present at the place.

The term *asura*, which literally means 'very strong', was originally used as an adjective to different powerful deities like Indra, Varuṇa, Pūṣan, Agni, Vāyu and others.³ But with the passing of time, when the oppression of the atheists became unbearable, the term *asura* changed its meaning and was often used to indicate the oppressors. Thus we find in different verses of the *Ṛgveda*, the gods Indra, Agni, etc., are described as 'the destroyer of the Asuras'.⁴

3 Indra—I.54.3 ; 174.1 ; Varuṇa—I.24.14 ; II.27.10 ; 28.7 ; Pūṣan—V.51.11 ; Agni—2.1.6 ; 4.2.5 ; 5.15.1 ; Vāyu—5.42.1 ; etc.

4 VI.22.4 ; VII.13.1 ; X.170.2 ; etc. [For the meanings of *asura*, see *The Vedic Age*, ed. Majumdar, pp. 219-20, 250.—Ed.]

II

IMPORTANCE OF SĀMAN IN THE PAÑCAVIMŚA BRĀHMAṆA

Bijay Pratap Mishra, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC,
Calcutta University

The religion of the Vedas lays much emphasis on the prayer to different gods, while in the Brāhmaṇas, sacrificial rites are more prominent than the chanting of the spells. Despite the above fact, the *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* attaches much importance to the Sāmans, sung at different occasions in sacrifices.¹ Therefore Indra, who was once the hero of the Vedic pantheon, is a smaller god in the Brāhmaṇas.² Similarly, as Macdonell believes, Prajāpati who is a great deity in the Brāhmaṇa literature, is described as having created the universe by seeing particular Sāmans. The gods are said, in other Vedic texts, to have occupied their abode ; but in the above-mentioned Brāhmaṇa, the Sāmans are said to be responsible for the possession of heaven by these divinities.

Our Brāhmaṇa records a story as to how the gods found the four quarters trembling when they were going to occupy heaven. They therefore saw the *Saubhara Sāman* which enabled them to make these quarters steady, and get to heaven.³ Another tale is told about the *Abhīvartta Sāman* which is also known as *Brahma Sāman*. The gods are said to have managed to occupy their abode by seeing the above Sāman.⁴ It is designated as Sāman as well as Ṛk.⁵ A similar story is told about the *Śapha Sāman* by means of which the

1 Chowkhamba Vedic Studies, No. 6, Varanasi, 1935. All the references, where no particular text is mentioned, are from the *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*.

2 Godbole, *JBU*, Vol. 25, p. 35.

3 VIII. 8.13.

4 IV. 3.1.

5 IV. 3.6.

gods attained heaven,⁶ while, by the *Sujñāna Sāman*, they obtained knowledge.⁷ The idea of making the trembling quarters steady is not unknown even to the Ṛgvedic poets. Savitr and Viṣṇu are credited with the task.⁸ The gods, having seen the *Ākṣāra Sāman*, possessed the divine cow Kāmadhenu and deprived the demons of their share.⁹ The possession of cows by the gods in general or by particular deities is already mentioned in the *Ṛgveda*. Indra is said to have taken back the cows possessed by the demons.¹⁰ The main event of the myth of Saramā and Paṇi is the release of the cows by Indra, Bṛhaspati and the Aṅgirasas, from their confinement by the demons.¹¹ Similarly Indra is said to have chopped off the head of Viśvarūpa who seized the cows.¹² The story of the escape of sacrifice is well-known to the other Brāhmaṇas, especially to the *Śatapatha*.¹³ We learn from another story how Viṣṇu became prominent among the gods by knowledge and his head was cut off by the string of his bow.¹⁴ However, in the *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*, this is ascribed to the *Yajñāyajñīya Sāman* seeing which the gods succeeded in getting knowledge.¹⁵ Another story told about the *Sauparṇa Sāman* is that sacrifice escaped from the gods assuming the form of an eagle, but that the gods saw the above Sāman and recovered it.¹⁶ When Svarbhānu eclipsed the sun, the gods saw the *Divākīrti Sāman* which enabled them to remove the darkness and win the light.¹⁷ But the demon eclips-

6 XV. 11.4-5 ; see also XI.5.5.

7 VI. 7.10-11.

8 RV, X 149.1 ; VII. 99.3 ; cf. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 11.

9 XI. 5.9.

10 RV, I. 57.6 ; X. 89.7.

11 Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

12 RV, X. 8.8-9 ; X. 76.3.

13 Devasthali, *Religion and Mythology of Brāhmaṇas with particular reference to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, pp. 4, 13; cf. *ŚB*, II. 4.1.17.

14 *ŚB*, XIV. 1.1. Cf. Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

15 XIII. 6.5.

16 XIV. 3.9-10.

17 IV. 6.13.

ing the sun also finds mention in the *Rgveda*.¹⁸ The sun was again placed on the sky by the sage Atri.¹⁹ In course of a combat between the gods and demons, the former played some tricks and deprived their enemies of their shares.²⁰ But in the *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*, the gods were taught the *Kāleya Sāman* by means of which they overpowered their foes.²¹ The gods saw the *Hārivarṇa Sāman* in order to deprive their enemies of their share.²² Several other combats between the gods and demons are described in the *Brāhmaṇas* as resulting in the former's victory.²³ However, the *Pañcaviṃśa* lays emphasis on the *Ardheḍā Sāman*, by seeing which the gods killed the demons, while they went to heaven by seeing the *Atisvāra Sāman*.²⁴ It may be mentioned in this connection that *Ardheḍā* is associated with *Śakvarī*, and *Atisvāra* with *Raivata*.²⁵ The gods occupied even the cities of the demons by seeing the *Paurumudga Sāman*.²⁶ The incident reminds us of Indra's casting down the fortresses of the demons, as mentioned in the *Rgveda*.²⁷ The *Brāhmaṇa*, glorifying the *Ariṣṭa Sāman*, tells a new tale. In a combat between the gods and demons, the latter were restored to life ; but the gods had no power to bring their dead back to life. They therefore practised penances. Consequently they saw the *Ariṣṭa Sāman* and won immortality, and went to heaven overpowering their foes.²⁸ The contest is found in the other *Brāhmaṇas* without glorifying the *Sāmans*. The subject has been studied in details by Devasthali with particular reference to the *Śatapatha*

18 *RV*, V. 40.

19 *Ibid.*, V. 40.6-8.

20 Devasthali, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

21 VIII. 3.1.

22 VIII. 9.1-2.

23 Cf. Devasthali, *op. cit.*, pp. 16 ff.

24 VIII. 9.

25 *Loc. cit.*

26 XII. 3.12-14.

27 Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

28 XII. 5.22-20.

Brāhmaṇa.²⁹ There a particular god is described as having performed the said task or other sacrificial rites.

Now, we come to Prajāpati, who was helpless when he did not see any Sāman. It is said that, before creating the universe, Prajāpati thought about what came to be the *Bṛhat Sāman*.³⁰ In another passage, it is said that, having become disappointed, he saw at last the *Ahīyava Sāman* and consequently created the universe.³¹ The same story has been told to glorify the *Atirātra* rite.³² Prajāpati saw the *Agniṣṭoma Sāman* which enabled him to create the universe.³³ That is why the Sāman is called *Sarvasādhaka*.³⁴ Elsewhere we are told that Prajāpati created the universe after seeing the *Mahīyava Sāman*.³⁵ According to another legend, he was separated from his own creation as a cow from her milk. He therefore saw the *Śrāyantīya Sāman* and made himself associated with the creation.³⁶ Finding that the creation was not expanding, Prajāpati saw the *Śākamaśva Sāman* for its expansion.³⁷ The *Cyāvana Sāman* was seen by him in order to bring rain on the earth.³⁸ Prajāpati Hiraṇyagarbha is described as the creator of heaven, earth, water and lives.³⁹ Secondly, the release of waters is an oft-repeated task of Indra (with his allies) who strikes down the demons of drought like Vṛtra, Śuṣṇa, Namuci, etc.⁴⁰ Thus we find that the feat assigned to Prajāpati in the *Brāhmaṇa* is also ascribed to him or other gods in the *Samhitās*, but without mentioning the Sāman.

29 Devasthali, *op. cit.*, pp. 18 ff.

30 VII. 6.1.

31 VII. 5.1.

32 IV. 1.4.

33 VI. 1.1.

34 VI. 1.6 ; VI. 3.9.

35 VII. 5.1.

36 IX. 6.7.

37 XX. 4. 4-5.

38 XIII. 5.11-13.

39 Macdonell, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-19 ; cf. *RV*, X. 121.3-7.

40 *Ibid.*, pp. 58 ff., 158 ff.

The combat between Indra and Vṛtra is an incident of frequent occurrence in the Saṁhitās and Brāhmaṇas. It was Indra who overpowered his enemy.⁴¹ Sometimes other gods are said to have rendered him help in overpowering Vṛtra.⁴² But in the *Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa*, from the daughter of Tvaṣṭṛ who assisted him Indra is said to have sought help after having seen the *Tvāṣṭrī Sāman*.⁴³ Elsewhere Indra is said to have approached Prajāpati who taught him the *Nānanda Sāman* enabling him to overpower his foe Vṛtra.⁴⁴ For the glorification of the *Śakvarī Sāman* another story is narrated as to how Indra got strength after seeing the above Sāman.⁴⁵ Indra hurled his thunderbolt having seen the *Abhinidhana Kāṇva Sāman*,⁴⁶ He killed Namuci after seeing the *Hārivarṇa Sāman*.⁴⁷ In another story the gods appear as arranging for a sacrifice which the demons wanted to disrupt. Therefore Indra saw the *Samvartta Sāman* by means of which he banished the demons and killed them by drowning them into waters.⁴⁸ The killing of Namuci by Indra is one of the important myths, which has drawn attention of Vedic scholars.⁴⁹ But no mention has been made of any Sāman in the Saṁhitās. The discomfiture of the demons in general is referred to in the *Rgveda* and other Saṁhitās.⁵⁰ Indra is said to have cured Akupārā from leprosy so that the Sāman was called *Akūpāra Sāman*.⁵¹ The incident reminds us the story of Apālā in the *Bṛhaddevatā*,⁵² wherein Indra is said to have

41 *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

42 The epithet *Vṛtrahan* is applied frequently to Agni and sometimes to Soma also. See *ibid.*, p. 60.

43 XII. 5.20-21 ; cf. Godbole, *JBU*, Vol. 25, p. 35.

44 XII. 3.4-5.

45 XIII. 4.1.

46 XIV. 4.5.

47 XII. 6.7-8.

48 XIV. 12.6-7.

49 Bloomfield, *JAOS*, Vol. 15, 1893 ; Coomaraswamy, *ibid.*, Vol. 55, pp. 375 ff.; see also Fowler Murray, *ibid.*, Vol. 62, 1942, pp. 36 ff.

50 Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

51 IX. 2.13-14.

52 VI. 99-108.

cured the leprosy of Apālā. The killing of the female demon Dirghajihvī by Sumitra is found in the *Jaiminīya*⁵³ and *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇas*; but here he is said to have seen the *Saumitra Sāman* and killed her.⁵⁴ Indra saw the *Vaikhānasa Sāman* by means of which he restored to life the sages, known as *Vaikhānasa*, who were killed by the demon *Rahasyu*.⁵⁵ When Indra gave the *Yatis* to the *Sālāvṛkas*, he saw the *Śuddhāśuddhīya Sāman* in order to expiate himself.⁵⁶ The great Indra of the *Ṛgveda*⁵⁷ appears as having got *tejas* and *hara* (power of overpowering the enemies) after seeing the *Hārāyaṇa Sāman*.⁵⁸

Agni became the guest as well as the lord of the people by seeing the *Viśoviśīya Sāman*.⁵⁹ He is already invoked in the *Ṛgveda* as the guest (*atithi*).⁶⁰ Further he is spoken of as having become *annāda* (food-eater) by seeing the *Gauṇagava Sāman*.⁶¹ Rudra became the presiding deity of all the beasts (*paśupati*) as he saw the *Māragīyava Sāman*.⁶² It may be recalled here that the epithet *paśupati* is frequently assigned to Rudra in the *Samhitās* and *Brāhmaṇas*.⁶³ In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, where the birth-story of Rudra is narrated, one of his eight names is *Paśupati*.⁶⁴ The *Aśvins* are said to have restored the old sage *Cyavana* to youth by seeing the *Vīṅka Sāman*.⁶⁵ In the *Ṛgveda*,

53 I. 162 f. See Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas*, pp. 125-26.

54 XIII. 6.9.

55 XIV. 4.7.

56 XIV. 11.28-29.

57 Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

58 XIV. 9.33-34.

59 XIV. 11.37-38.

60 V. 8.2; X. 91.2; see also Macdonell, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-96.

61 XIV. 3.19.

62 XIV. 9.11-12.

63 *Vājasaneyi Samhitā*, XXXIX. 8.

64 VI. I. 3.7; cf. I. 7.3.8. In these passages, Rudra and Agni are identical; see also Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 75; cf. Devasthali, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

65 XIV. 6.9-10.

the Aśvins are described as having rendered the old Cyavana desirable to his wife.⁶⁶ Yama dwelt in his abode along with the fathers (*pitrs*) because he saw the *Yāma Sāman*.⁶⁷ In the *Rgveda*, the abode of Yama where he dwells with the manes is mentioned.⁶⁸ Similarly, Soma became the king of all medicinal herbs as he saw the *Soma Sāman*.⁶⁹ As the Soma played an all-important part in sacrifice, he is said to be the king and born as lord of all medicinal herbs.⁷⁰ Kaśyapa became famous as well as victorious by seeing the *Akūpāra Sāman*.⁷¹ It is interesting to note that the word occurs in one passage of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* where he is identified with Prajāpati and is said to have created the universe.⁷² The *Bhāsa Sāman* is believed to have been seen by Atri in order to place the sun again in the sky when the demon Svarbhānu eclipsed it.⁷³ The *Rgveda* mentions Svarbhānu who encompassed the sun, and Atri is said to have found it again.⁷⁴ Similarly we are told that Manu saw the *Mānava Sāman* by means of which he begot several offsprings.⁷⁵ In the *Rgveda*, the word *mānava* occurs to denote 'man'.⁷⁶ The *Śatapatha* also describes Manu as the ruler of men.⁷⁷ He is said to be the first man indicating that he is the originator of the human race.⁷⁸ A story is narrated in connection with the *Vārśa Sāman*. Vṛśa Jāna brought back to

66 I. 116-10 ; I. 117.13, etc. ; Macdonell, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

67 XI. 10.21.

68 X. 15.11 ff. ; Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

69 XI. 3.8-9.

70 RV, IX. 114.2 ; Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

71 XV. 5.29-30.

72 *loc. cit.*

73 XIV. 11.12, 14.

74 V. 40.5-6.

75 ŚB, XIII. 3.14-15.

76 Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 138. [Sic.—Cd.]

77 VIII. 3.4.3-5.

78 As he is the first man, it may be assumed that all men sprang from him. Cf. Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

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life the Brāhmaṇa lad whose head was cut off by the wheel of a chariot.⁷⁹

Thus we find that, in the *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*, nothing is superior to the Sāmans, even the highest gods like Indra and Prajāpati being subordinated to them. Whatever success is attributed to a god in the Saṁhitās or Brāhmaṇas, it is a result of seeing a particular Sāman according to the *Pañcaviṃśa*. The only reason is that the *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* belongs to the *Sāmaveda* wherein emphasis has been laid on singing the *mantras*. The Sāman is nothing but a particular mode of chanting or repeating the spell, and that is why it is believed to be the most important means to achieve a goal according to the *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa*. The stories, which glorify the Sāmans, may be considered to be the *arthavādas* meant for tempting a man so that he may utilize the Sāmans in sacrifice. There are a good number of stories, found in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* also, which lays emphasis on a particular sacrificial rite,⁸⁰ without mentioning these Sāmans in such detail.

79 XIII. 3.12.

80 Devasthali, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

III

MAGIC AND MIRACLE IN BUDDHISM

Sm. S. Sengupta, Delhi University

Magic was and is practised not only in India, but throughout the world, from time immemorial. In a wider sense, it includes the performance of wonder or miracles, i.e., whatever is beyond the capacity of an ordinary human being. When man is incapable of finding out solutions of a problem, whether physical or psychological, an appeal is made either to supernatural elements beyond the earth or to their agents on the earth in human form such as the priests or occultists. These are done either by propitiatory acts like sacrifices, or by magic and witchcraft. Thus in the *Rgveda*, we find elements of nature being propitiated by sacrifices, whereas in the *Atharva-veda*, different calamities are sought to be averted by mystic *mantras* of sorcery and witchcraft. A study of ancient literature shows that in its primitive stage, religion and magic were inextricably blended together and the same person acted as both priest and magician to propitiate supernatural powers and perform impossible or difficult tasks, in order to fulfil the aim of his client. Gradually, the two were separated and magic started to be looked down upon as a lower craft as against the superior one of sacrifice. In the Vedic literature, the *Rgveda* became the manual for sacrifices while the *Atharva-veda* became the repository of magic formulae and sorcery. But the division was not watertight, vestiges of magic being traceable in the *Rgvedic* hymns and the *Ātharvanic* offering some beautiful specimens of poetry.

But the distinction went on increasing, and magic, which included exorcism and sorcery, became the monopoly of a class of people who made it a means of their livelihood, taxing on the superstitious beliefs of innocent people. About the time of the Buddha's advent, people's minds were saturated

with superstition, and magic, witchcraft and the like. In fact, the Vedic sacrifices were almost substituted by exorcism which were censured by the Buddha. The Buddhist canonical literature throws a flood of light on the practices. In the *Brahmajāla Sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya* we come across an interesting list of arts which the Buddha condemns as *tiracchānavijjā*, *micchā ājīva*, and forbids, not only his disciples, but all good men, to refrain from them. Magic, even of a benevolent nature, like curing diseases, is regarded as pernicious by him. The list includes, among others, palmistry, astrology, astronomy, all kinds of sacrifices, all kinds of witchcraft and exorcism, dealing with poisonous creatures like snake, scorpion, etc., tendering remedies for their poison, administering medicines from herbs and roots, for relieving different kinds of physical ailments, worship of different gods and goddesses, even composing ballads, poems and working out large sums in a short time,¹ many of which are practised even to-day. Some other Suttas, like the *Kevadha Sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*,² refer to the practice of magic and miracles.

But in spite of the Buddha's aversion for magical practices, he himself could not avoid it. As in the early period the lines of demarcation between sacrifice and magic was thin, in the Buddha's age the line of demarcation between magic and miracles was not wide.

It is a well-known fact that the aspirant for Arhathood attains some supernatural power called *iddhi* (*iddhi* in Pali) at a certain stage of mental development. The Buddha was very much against his disciples manifesting this power, as it would, instead of helping them to further progress, drag them down. The false declaration of this power is one of the most serious offences, a *Pārājikā*, which deprives a monk of his membership of the Buddhist community. In the *Cullavagga*, it is said that a monk who shows his miraculous power to the laymen for material gain, is like a woman who shows her

1 For fuller detail, cf. *Brahmajāla Sutta* (*Dīghanikāya*), I.

2 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, No. 11.

charms for money, and is liable to a Dukkata offence.³ But when it was necessary, the Buddha not only permitted his disciples to use their miraculous powers, but he himself also took recourse to them. Otherwise, how could we explain his behaviour when, in order to convert the Jaṭila brothers, he lived in the same room with a dragon who was overpowered by him and was found the next morning to be converted into a small insect and how could a pot of fire reach each of the mendicants who were suffering from extreme cold while taking bath in the river, or how could the Buddha walk on the river or perform miracle at Śrāvastī?⁴ The conversion of Nanda, the Buddha's brother, by showing heavenly nymphs, which was simply his mental creation, but which cured Nanda of his desperate attachment to his wife whom he had left at home, may be cited as one more example.⁵ The *Mahāpadāna Sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*, which contains legends of the Buddha, is replete with miracles, specially concerning his birth and conception.⁶ The *Pāṭika Sutta* depicts the Buddha not only as taking part in competition of the manifestation of miracles with the ascetics of other sects, but also as boasting of his miraculous powers.⁷ His favourite disciple Moggallāna was said to be famous for such powers. Of course, arguments put forward in justification of these acts are that they attained their desired goal before the manifestations and that these were to make an impression upon people of other sects and the non-believers, since the manifestation of occult powers was much more effective than any amount of discourses and arguments. Throughout Buddhist literature, we come across numerous examples of the manifestation of supernatural powers, either by the Buddha or by some of his disciples. Though it evidently contains earlier and later traditions (those portions which contain

3 *Vinaya Piṭaka—Cullavagga*, 8.2.

4 See *Vinaya Piṭaka—Mahāvagga* (S.B.E., Vol. 13).

5 Cf. Winternitz, *HIL*, Vol. II, p. 263.

6 *Dīghanikāya*, No. 14.

7 *Ibid.*, No. 24.

theories and practices contrary to the Buddha's original dogma are supposed to be later additions), it is at the same time sure that they are at least prior to the final reduction of the Canon. The Jātaka stories contain numerous instances of magic and spells. A few early Buddhist sculptures also depict miraculous events, thus proving the antiquity of these anecdotes.

Not only the exhibition of miracles, but also the efficacy of *mantras*, which the Buddha totally discarded as useless, is to be found even in the earlier portion of the Pali Tripiṭaka. In the *Cullavagga*, V.6, a *mantra* or charm is mentioned as being prescribed by the Buddha to be used as a means of warding off the fear of snake-bite and the snakes are appeased with friendliness (*mettā*). Cf. *Virūpakkhehi me mettā...*, etc.⁸ In the *Ratana Sutta* of the *Khuddakanikāya*, the Triratna is recited to ward off all dangers and to bring prosperity. The *Parittās*, which are very popular particularly among the Ceylonese Buddhists, and called *rakṣā-mantra*, are nothing but protective spells and date back to a very early period.⁹

With the passing of years, with his personal memory fading out in the minds of his devotees, the halo round his name broadened, and Buddha was gradually deified and numerous miraculous stories were woven around him. Even his earthly existence was denied, he being transformed to be a *lokottara*; his birth, renunciation, enlightenment, preaching and ultimate death—all were taken to be illusory creations, for the instruction of mankind. All the objects connected with him, his corporeal relics, the objects used by him, like his dress, stick, almsbowl—were endowed with magical power. In the records of the Chinese pilgrims, we often find mention of the miracles performed by these articles.

Buddhist literature, of a heterogeneous nature and belonging to Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, grew into a huge bulk during subsequent periods. Texts like the *Mahāvastu* and *Lalitavistara* which give the Buddha's biography and the Jātakas and

8 *Khuddakanikāya*, No. 6.

9 Cf. Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

Avadānas abound in stories of magic and miracles. Coming from the hands of a number of very eminent Buddhist scholars, who left a rich legacy to the posterity, a number of later texts, which are essentially religious or philosophical in nature, became popular manuals for the devotees. Regular reading of the nine Vaipulya Sūtras like the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* or knowledge *par excellence*, *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra*, *Samādhirāja*, etc., ensured immense merit to the readers. These texts also are full of legends about the magical and miraculous powers of the Buddha. Of these texts, the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*, which became the most important, was enlarged from its original size ; but when it was found to be inconvenient to read the whole text, the readers condensed the text into shorter forms, the reading of which ensured the same merit, and this gave rise to a number of recensions of the text, varying from a hundred thousand verses to a text with only a few words (*svalp-ākṣarī*). Even a monosyllabic *mantra*, i.e., the *bīja-mantra*, was innovated which was supposed to be equally effective, if not more. Of course, it took a long time for all these expansions and contractions to take place. It changed with the trend of the religion. Some of the texts as well as some ideas in the Mahāyāna texts were also deified and their appearance, mode of worship and requisite *mantras* and rituals were codified, and they again, in their turn, gave rise to a class of literature which is by no means meagre.

With the development of Mahāyāna, with its idea of the Bodhisattvas and Dhyāni-Buddhas, not only the deification of the above-mentioned concepts, but numerous other gods and goddesses were also innovated and the family of Buddhist divinities went on growing bigger and bigger, particularly with the incorporation of a number of Brāhmaṇical divinities into its pantheon. The male gods, together with their Śaktis or powers, prayed to together, would bestow any kind of boon to the supplicants, however difficult it might be. There lay their miraculous power. Of these divinities, Avalokiteśvara, who is supposed to be extremely compassionate to all beings, and

Tārā, his consort, in all her emanations, are more popular. Tārā, as her name suggests, is the saviouress and is famous for her quality of rescuing her propitiators from all kinds of danger. Fa-hien is said to have prayed to Avalokiteśvara for deliverance from a shipwreck when he was overtaken by a storm, and reached shore safely.

The second half of the first millennium A.D. saw not only the full-fledged development of Mahāyāna, but also its culmination into Tantrism. Belief in the efficacy of *mantras* and rituals already existed, from the beginning, among a class of people; by this time it percolated into Buddhist society in general and penetrated into the monasteries, as is manifest from numerous images of Tāntric gods and goddesses as well as Dhāraṇīs or short spells discovered from the remains of Buddhist institutions belonging to this period. Though according to some scholars, esoteric practices were present in Buddhism from its inception, it is not supported by reliable evidence. Moreover, it does not suit well a person like the Buddha with his high aesthetic sense to indulge in Tāntric practices that are not always refined. The reason for these practices creeping into Buddhism and becoming popular in later days seems to be that during that period, Śaiva and Śākta Tāntric practices were very popular in Eastern India, and Mahāyāna, which had already changed colour in its effort to make the religion popular, had to take resort to such practices to keep pace with Brāhmaṇical Tāntrism in its eagerness to maintain its popularity. In Mahāyāna texts, we find references to magical practices. In the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra* (Ch. XXI) mentioned above, we find reference to one Bhaiṣajyarāja who utters Dhāraṇīs for curing diseases. In the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*, we find that, as Avalokiteśvara enters the hell, to relieve the sinners, the boiling hell becomes a cool and pleasant place.¹⁰ Similar instances we find in a certain earlier Hīnayāna text, the *Visuddhimagga*, in which saints are shown to have attained miraculous magical powers by practising

10 *Ibid.*, p. 307.

meditation. A monk is swallowed by a fish and another put into the funeral pyre remains alive ; a nun, absorbed in meditation, remains unhurt even in boiling oil.¹¹

Mahāyāna developed into Tantrayāna with its two sections Mantrayāna and Vajrayāna, though there is not much difference between the two. As has been mentioned above, a bulk of literature came into existence for the worship of Tāntric or Vajrayāna deities. As the Tāntric practices are esoteric in nature, the *mantras* and rituals were made secret and in order to do that, a type of mystic language, at least a few mystic syllables were introduced into the *mantras*. The mystic *mantras* which, however, are not always very short, are either independent or the abbreviated forms of longer texts, called Dhāraṇīs, and the mystic syllables, which are sometimes monosyllabic, are called the *bīja-mantra* and are supposed to be highly effective, if pronounced properly. Just as a small seed contains the power to produce a magnificent tree, similarly the *bīja-mantras* are supposed to contain immense potentiality. The *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya Sūtra* and *Svalpākṣarī Prajñāpāramitā* used as Dhāraṇī, and the *bīja-mantra Pra* for the long *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* are examples to cite.

The Dhāraṇīs ushered in a new phase in the history of magical practices in Buddhism. They are protective spells and are a special feature of the Buddhists. These mystic *mantras* are of the type of Vedic, particularly Atharvavedic, *mantras* and were used for incantation or benediction, or as magic spell. The exact date of their introduction in Buddhist ritual is not known ; but its antiquity goes back to a period much earlier than when they became popular. Hiuen-tsang mentions a Dhāraṇī-piṭaka or Vidyādhara-piṭaka. In most of the early texts, including the nine Vaipulya Sūtras, we come across these spells, either under the name of Dhāraṇī or merely as protective spells. It is only at a later date that they became an important section of later Buddhist literature. They are used for both benevolent and destructive purposes and do good to their users

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 203-04

and destroy their enemies. They are recited to protect the user from all sorts of calamities and, as such, most of the *mantras* contain words and phrases like *dara 2 vidara 2 dhaka 2 jvala 2 rakṣa 2 mām sarvasattvānām ca cora-bhayāt rāja-bhayāt śastra-bhayāt viṣa-bhayāt śatru-bhayāt agni-bhayāt viṣa-śastra-bhayāt*, etc. Some of the shorter spells are to be repeated constantly either for protection or for gaining merit. *Om maṇipadme hum* on the lips of all Tibetan Buddhists is a Dhāraṇi-mantra. The total number of available Dhāraṇis cannot be ascertained ; but there is no doubt that they are numerous. The bulk of them are still available in Nepal which was the resort of the later phase of Buddhism, and became a great centre thereof, and some are available in India itself. A number of them are traceable in countries outside India or Nepal, as they were taken away by foreigners interested in their use. In the *Sādhana-mālā*, a text of Buddhist Tāntric formulas for worship, we not only find descriptions or *dhyānas* of different gods and goddesses, but also the *mantras* for *māraṇa*, *uccāṭana*, *vaśikaraṇa*, etc. Various gods are invoked and different *mantras* are recited for a variety of purposes. Thus Aṣṭamahābhaya-Tārā is invoked for rescuing from eight kinds of fear like shipwreck, etc. The collection of five Dhāraṇis, extremely popular in Nepal and called *Pañcarakṣā*, contains protective spells in the name of five goddesses, viz. (1) Mahāpratisarā for protection from sins, diseases and other evils ; (2) Mahāsahasrapramardinī for driving away evil spirits ; (3) Mahāmāyurī for safety against snake poison ; (4) Mahāsītavatī for safety against hostile planets, wild animals and poisonous insects ; (5) Mahā[rakṣā]mantrānusāriṇī for protection from all kinds of diseases.

The Dhāraṇis are used not only in rituals, but also as amulets for their protective power. They are written on paper, metal objects or birch bark, etc., and are tied to the arms, neck or any suitable part of the body and are supposed to protect the wearer from all kinds of danger. This practice is most popular in Tibet and Nepal, though it is also found in India



and other parts of the world. Cloth flags with protective charms written on them and hoisted near the temples and residential houses on special occasions like child-birth, marriage, etc., for protection against evil spirits haunting those places, form a part of this magic cult.

In conclusion, we may state that a study of Buddhist literature reveals the fact that Buddhism ended its journey to the place whence it started. It originated as a protest against the prevailing ritualistic religion, but ended in being a complete ritualistic and esoteric religion itself.

IV

**BUDDHIST PAVĀRAṆĀ AND ITS OBSERVANCE
IN JAPAN**

Sm. S. Sengupta, Delhi University

Pavāraṇā (Sanskrit *Pravāraṇa*) is a Buddhist function. It is a gathering of Buddhist monks after the Vassāvāsa or rainy-season retreat for three months. Following the age-old tradition of India, the Buddhist monks of ancient days did not move about during the three months of rains, mainly because of inconveniences of travelling as also for fear of trampling the tender sprouts and insects which were profuse during this time. After the Vassāvāsa, monks used to assemble in the monastery in order to declare their purity or confess all their sins of omission and commission for that period, just like the fortnightly Uposatha ceremony observed regularly in the Buddhist monasteries. It is called the day of confession as well as the day of self-indulgence, as the restriction on movements was withdrawn probably from this day. For the laity, it is also a day of acquiring merits by offering food and robes to the monks. A necessary corollary to the Pavāraṇā is the Kaṭhina ceremony. It relates to the distribution of clothes. All the dress material, received as gift, are collected together and a monk is given the charge of cutting them in proper shapes as well as stitching and colouring them and distributing them to all the monks according to their individual necessities. It is a day of solemn ceremony and gay festival and is observed throughout the Buddhist world. In India, the Vassāvāsa starts from the day next to the full moon day of Āṣāḍha (June-July) or Śrāvaṇa (July-August); but in other countries like China and Japan where people used to follow the lunar calendar, they usually have fixed dates for this purpose. The ceremony has undergone much change in those countries, though it is still recognised as being originally a Buddhist ceremony. In early

Indian tradition, there is no mention of doing anything for the benefit of the living or departed souls during the Pavāraṇā ceremony; in later days, it became mainly a festival for the dead, particularly in the countries outside India such as China and Japan. Let us make a brief survey of the ceremony observed in these countries.

Every year, in the month of July, the people of Japan celebrate a festival called Bon—or more reverentially, O-Bon. It has a fixed period, from the 13th to the 16th of July; but it continues for more than a week; and the dates being different in cities and the countryside—where the lunar calendar is still followed,—the festival continues practically for more than a month, throughout the length and breadth of the country.

This festival is known differently as the festival of the Fathers, Festival of the Dead, Festival of Lamps, etc. This is a remnant of Shintoism—Japan's ancient religion, which is a form of ancestor worship—with a mixture of Buddhism. Though the general practice among the Japanese is to burn their dead bodies, they also preserve a portion of the relics entombed in the family burial ground, usually attached to the respective temples of the particular sect to which they belong, each family having its own symbol marked on the tombs. The tombs have big hollow spaces inside, with a small door, through which they insert small relic urns, whenever there is a death in the family. During the Bon festival, the souls of the departed ancestors are supposed to visit their habitat and unite with their descendants.

Early in the morning of the first day of the festival, people visit the family monuments, clean the tombs and the adjacent areas, burn incense and offer food and water at the tomb and the adjoining temples. After performing these rituals, they welcome the spirits of the ancestors, as if they have come to receive them into their earthly homes. They make a show of taking them home where all arrangements for their reception are ready and usher them in first through widely open doors and themselves follow them. Most orthodox families have a

family shrine in the shape of a built-in wooden cupboard on the wall where they perform their daily rituals. These shelves are decorated for this special occasion, and cooked rice, tea, fruits, flowers and incense are offered to the spirits. A fire of the hemp-stalk called mukae-bi or 'welcome-fire'¹ is burnt at the door-step at night and priests come and read special texts befitting the occasion. In the temples also priests read religious texts for the redemption of souls of the ancestors of their clients as well as for those who have no relatives to pray for them. On these days, the householders lead a restrained life and live on vegetarian food only. The children are made to move about in a way as not to disturb or annoy the revered souls who are supposed to be present there.

In recent times, the popular aspect is becoming more prominent than the religious, and the festival has become a folk-festival. The hemp-stalk fire has almost been replaced by paper lanterns which are kept burning at the door-steps throughout the night, so that the ancestors are in no difficulty in finding out their old abodes in the darkness of night. The beautiful paper lanterns, called Bon-doro or Bon-jochin, serve the purpose of decoration also. In order to celebrate the re-union with the forefathers, people arrange for dances. Usually they lit a big fire in the centre of the temple yards and men and women, young and old, dance in a circle round the fire. There is the beating of drums, blowing of flutes and singing of special songs on the occasion. It is picturesque to see hundreds of people, mostly clad in their national dress, Kimono, dancing in a big ring.

On the last day of the festival, which usually falls on the 16th July, another fire, called the Okuri-bi or 'send-off fire', is lit at the doors of the householders, and there are fire-works and the floating of lamps in the river nearby, signifying the sending off of the ancestors on illuminated paths. It offers the charming sight of thousands of lamps floating on the river.

In connection with the Okuri-bi, it may be pointed out

¹ *Bukkyo Jirin*, p. 813 (*mukae-bi*) and p. 89 (*okuri-bi*).



that, in Japan, in case of a death in the family, a fire under the same name is kindled at the gate of the house, before the coffin is taken out. This also points to ideas connected with the funeral ceremonies as in India and China.²

According to a work belonging to the Jodo-shinshu sect of Japan, the Okuri-bi, 'are not lights to send off the spirits, but fires kindled on the mountains and moors and on the banks of the rivers, in order to burn the offerings'. The Japanese houses being mostly of wood, it was not safe to burn them near the houses, and they were burnt far away from them.³ Burning the offerings meant that they were being carried away to the spirits by the fire. That is why the name is Okuri-bi. Here we find ideological similarity with the Vedic sacrifices where fire is also called the 'priest who carries the oblations to the gods ; the mouth of sacrifice'.

Another 'fire rite' is the pine-wood fire on the mountain tops of Western Japan. Tradition tells us that it was introduced by the illustrious prince-monk, Kobo-daishi. Each year, from the first week of the seventh month, i.e., July, pine trees were used to be cut, dried and piled on the mountain top, the uneven surface of which was levelled with pebbles. In the night of the 16th, fire burning in the shape of a hundred feet square letter 'Dae', which means 'big', could be seen from far off places.⁴ This is also for the Bon festival.

Now let us try to trace the origin of the ceremony. It is a curious mixture of Hinduism of India, Taoism of China, Shintoism of Japan and Buddhism of all these countries. The full name of this festival in Japanese is Urabon-no-matsuri or Urabon-e, from which Bon is a shortened form and the Sanskrit rendering of which is *Ullambana* or *Avalambana*, which means 'to hang upside down' or 'to be in suspense'. In a Chinese dictionary entitled 'Sounds and Meanings of the Whole Canon', the meaning is given as 'a rite of the Western

2 *Ibid.*, p. 89 ; *Bukkyo Daijiten*, No. 11983.

3 Eku, *Sorinshu*, Ch. IX.

4 Cf. *Wakan sansai zue*, Ch. IV, Sec. *Urabon*.

countries.' On the day of self-indulgence of the monks (Pravāraṇa—the last day of the Indian rainy season,) plentiful offerings are made to the Buddha and to the Saṅgha, in order to save the dead [relatives] from the sufferings of 'being in suspense'.....⁵ It has reference to the *Avalambana Sūtra*.⁶ In this *Sūtra*, we find the story of Mahā-Maudgalyāyana (Pali *Moggallāna*) as follows. Once, when the Buddha was at Śrāvastī in Anāthapiṇḍada's forest, Maudgalyāyana attained the six Abhijñās or superior knowledges, and wished to bring salvation to his parents as compensation to the debt he owed to them. But with his divine eyes he saw that his mother has become a *preti* and could not eat or drink anything. Out of compassion, he brought food to her ; but those became fire and ashes before they reached her mouth. He went to the Buddha to ask for the reason and its solution, whereupon the Buddha said that his mother's sin was deep-rooted and it could not be expiated except by offering different kinds of food, drink and other requisites to the monks and priests of ten (i.e., all) directions, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, i.e. the Pravāraṇa day ; because the merits accrued by making gifts to the holy monks on that day enable the parents upto seven generations as well as six kinds of relatives of the donor to escape sufferings and obtain salvation. This Maudgalyāyana did and his mother attained salvation. The Buddha declared that, in future also, all the Buddha's disciples, i.e., the monks, nuns and lay devotees, would attain the same result by offering the same gift, i.e., their parents, etc., will attain salvation and they themselves will enjoy happy and prosperous life for a hundred years. A litany is also prescribed to be recited by the monks before accepting the gifts and mediation is also recommended, so that the offerings go to the Buddha and the Saṅgha. In the *Mahāvastu*,⁷ there is an account of the hells and of the sufferings witnessed there by Mahā-Maudgalyāyana. In the

5 Nanjio, Catalogue, No. 1606.

6 *Ibid.*, Nos. 303-04.

7 Cf. Winternitz, *HIL*, Vol. II, p. 244, note.

Petavatthu commentary also, we come across such stories of the Pretas being released by religious offerings made by their relatives in the world.

The Chinese character 'Bon' also means a vessel, i.e. the vessel of eatables to be offered to the Buddha and Saṅgha for the benefit of those in suspense. And it fits in well with the festival, the main item of which was originally the feeding of monks.

According to the older Chinese reckoning, the Vassāvāsa or retreat for the Buddhist monks during rains, started from the sixteenth day of the fourth month and ended on the fifteenth day of the seventh. The end of this retreat is celebrated with the Pravāraṇa ceremony all over the Buddhist world, as already mentioned above. The Chinese traveller I-tsing gives a beautiful description of this ceremony. He says that, on the previous night, they 'light lamps continuously and offer incense and flowers. The next morning (i.e. on the festival day), they all go round villages or towns and worship all the *caityas* with sincere minds.... At the beginning of the forenoon, they come back to the monastery; at noon they keep the great Upavāsatha ceremony.... At this time, either the laymen present gifts or the Saṅgha itself distributes them and all sorts of gifts are brought out before the assembly....'⁸ This Pravāraṇa ceremony is the basis of the Avalambana or Urabon festival which gradually became a sacrifice for the dead, as indicated by the Sūtra and the nature of the festival. Though at a later time, the date of the Vassāvāsa for the Buddhist monks of China and Japan was changed, the date of the Avalambana festival remained unchanged.

In Japan, this festival was held for the first time in 606 A.D.,⁹ i.e. soon after the introduction of Buddhism into Japan. It was during the reign of the empress Suiko, who got two images of the Buddha—a copper one and an embroidered one, made to order. On the day of the installation of the

8 Takakusu, Ch. XV.

9 *Nihongi*, Ch. XXV, p. 380.

copper image in a temple, she gave a feast attended by innumerable people. From this year, vegetarian festivals were held in all the temples on the eighth day of the fourth month, i.e., on the Buddha's birthday, and on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, i.e., the Avalambana day. The *Nihongi*, the oldest recorded history of Japan, records many other important dates when this festival was observed with certain peculiarities. In China, the festival was held for the first time by the emperor Wu-ti in 538 A.D. when it was called 'vegetarian entertainment'.¹⁰ It was followed by other emperors, including Tai-tsung in 766 A.D., and was made an annual celebration.

The form of Buddhism, which China imported from India, was early Mahāyāna. It came into contact with the native religion and moulded itself according to the changed circumstances, assimilating some ideas of the latter. Japan had the first taste of Buddhism from China *via* Korea. So, the form of Buddhism which was introduced into Japan, was an advanced type of Mahāyāna faith, which had travelled a long way from its pristine position, in time and space, and had undergone a great deal of change. In Japan too, it had to undergo certain changes in order to adapt itself to the new soil. Gradually, Tantrism crept into Buddhism, and China and Japan were also prompt in incorporating it into their own religion. A number of Tāntric schools emerged and a number of texts made their appearance, adding to the bulk of Mahāyāna literature. All the Buddhist rituals, including the one under discussion, were given a Tāntric colouring by the respective schools, along with different interpretations of their own.

The mystic creed, as recorded in the *Himitsu Jirin* or Mystic Dictionary of the Japanese,¹¹—the Avalambana rites,—which consists of 'a secret ceremony in honour of Śākyamuni to save the dead', is different from 'the Ceremony and Meeting for Distributing Food to the Pretas'. The last ceremony 'takes place in the dark of night, under a tree on a quiet spot or by

10 Nanjio, No. 1661.

11 *Himitsu Jirin*, p. 85 (*Urabon-e*).

waterside, where an altar is erected, three feet high...or without an altar and without lighting of fire. In the deepest silence and quietness, water is sprinkled upon the drink and food, the *Amṛta Dhāraṇī* is recited, meditation...is practised, the names of the Five Buddhas¹² are invoked and thus the offerings are distributed to the Pretas. If priests of the mystic creed perform this ceremony every night, they accumulate meritorious and blissful actions'. The dictionary further mentions that 'it is wrong to confound the Avalambana with this meeting, [simply] because, as a rule, it takes place on the day of the Avalambana festival'.¹³

The above mentioned *Amṛta Dhāraṇī* is included in Nanjio's *Catalogue of Chinese Tripiṭaka* (which, incidentally, is used by both the Chinese and the Japanese people), under the name *Buddhabhāṣitāmṛta Sūtra Dhāraṇī* (No. 540) and was translated by Śikṣānanda, a monk from Khotan. A number of other Dhāraṇīs or magic spells, which are traced in Nanjio's Catalogue, deal with the offerings made for the benefit of the Pretas, e.g., Nos. 539, 984, 985, 1467, etc. The Pretas included in them are not only the sinners, but also those who are solitary, neglected spirits who are fallen in battles, drowned in rivers, or at sea, having died abroad, or in prison, etc.¹⁴

Thus we find the ancient Pravāraṇa ceremony, which was originally confined to the monks, assimilated different non-Buddhist ideas from different countries and was transformed into a novel rite, the nature of which is more popular than religious.

12 The five Buddhas are Ratnasambhava, Akṣobhya, Amitābha, Mahā-Vairocana and Śākyamuni.

13 *Himitsu Jirin*, p. 642 (*Segaki-e*).

14 Nanjio, No. 1467 (Pt. II. App.); also *Bukkyo Daijiten*, p. 1025 (*Segaki-ho*).

V

BUDDHIST CEREMONIES

Sm. Kshanika Saha, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC,
Calcutta University

Buddhism may be regarded as more a cultural than a religious movement with the minimum of ceremonies, rites and rituals confined to the monks and nuns. These ceremonies were Pabbajjā, Upasampadā, Uposatha, Vassāvāsa, Pavāraṇā and Kaṭhina.

Pabbajjā. It literally means 'going out from home to homeless life' (*agārasmā anagāriyam*). The Pabbajjā ceremony was a formal affair. The utterance of the Trisaraṇa formula was all that was necessary. This ceremony made the prospective entrant a Sāmaṇera who had to choose formally his Upajjhāya.¹

"And let them choose, O Bhikkhus, an Upajjhāya in this way. Let him adjust his upper robe so as to cover one shoulder, salute the feet, sit down squatting, raise his joined hands and say : 'Venerable Sir, be my Upajjhāya.' Should he say, 'well' or 'certainly' or 'good' or 'carry on' with friendliness, or should he express this by gesture and word, then the Upajjhāya has been chosen. If he does not express this by gesture nor by word nor by gesture and word, the Upajjhāya has not been chosen."² After this a Sāmaṇera was to provide himself with an almsbowl and robes, observe the ten precepts (*dasa-*

1 See MV, I.25.7—*evaṇ=ca pana bhikkhave upajjhāya gahetabbo. ekaṃsaṃ uttarāsaṃgaṃ karitvā pāde vanditvā ukkuṭikaṃ nisīdītva añjalini paggaḥetvā evaṃ assa vacanīyo upjhhāyo me bhante hohi...upjhhāyo me bhante hohīti. Sāhu ti vā lahu ti vā opāyikaṃ ti vā patirūpeṇa ti vā pāsādikena sampādeh=īti vā kāyena viññāpeti vācāya viññāpeti...na gahito hoti upajjhāyo.*

2 SBE, Vol. XIII, p. 154.

sikkhāpadāni)³ and render all possible service to his teacher.⁴

Upasampadā. This ceremony made the Sāmaṇera a regular member of the Saṅgha—a Bhikkhu, twenty years being the lowest age at which a Sāmaṇera is qualified for Upasampadā. In the early days of the Saṅgha, the Upasampadā was simple and direct. The person desirous of monkhood went to the Buddha and requested the latter to accept him as his disciple, and the Buddha accepted him by the simple utterance of *ehi Bhikkhu*.⁵ Later on, due to the increase in the number of candidates and to the spread of the creed in wider areas, he often relegated this responsibility to his disciples. From that time several restrictions like the following were laid down.

A person seeking ordination was required to have his hair and moustache shaved, to put on yellow robes and, after covering one shoulder only by the robe, to sit on his legs, to salute the Bhikkhus and then, with folded hands, to utter the Trisaraṇa formula.⁶

After sometime, when the utterance of the formula was found inadequate, the *Ñatti-catuttha kamma* (an act requiring four stages)⁷ was introduced. The *kamma* has been described as follows. "Let the Saṅgha, reverend Sirs, hear me. This person A desires to receive the Upasampadā ordination from the venerable B. The Saṅgha confers on A the Upasampadā ordination with B as Upajjhāya. Let any one of the venerable brethren, who is in favour of the Upasampadā ordination of A with B as Upajjhāya be silent and any one, who is not in favour of it, speak. And for the second time, I thus speak to

3 *MV*, I.56.1-58—*Bhagavato etaṃ atthaṃ ārocesuṃ. anujānāmi bhikkhave sāmaṇerānaṃ dasa sikkhāpadāni, tesu ca sāmaṇerehi sikkhituṃ : pāṇātipātā veramaṇī, adinnādānā veramaṇī, surāmerayamajja-pamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī, vikālabhojanā veramaṇī, naccagītavādittavisukadassanā veramaṇī, mālāgandhavilepana-dhāraṇamaṇḍavibhūsanatṭhānā veramaṇī, uccāsayanama-hāsayanā veramaṇī, jātārūparajatapaṭiggahaṇā veramaṇī.*

4 *Ibid.*, I.69.1.

5 Bhagvat, *Early Buddhist Jurisprudence*, p. 130.

6 *MV*, I.12.2 ; *SBE*, Vol. XIII, p. 115.

7 Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India*, p. 89.

you, Let the Saṅgha.....(*as before*). And for the third time, I thus speak to you : Let the Saṅgha.....(*as before*)."⁸ This ceremony must be performed before ten Bhikkhus at least.

Immediately after the ordination, the Bhikkhu is apprised of the four *Nissayas* upon which he is to depend, viz., living on alms (*piṇḍiyālopabhojanam*), using robes made out of rags (*paṃsukūlacīvaram*), taking urine and such other things as medicine (*pūtimuttabhisaḥḥam*) and sleeping under trees (*rukhamūlasenāsanam*).⁹

After the Upasampadā ordination, the Bhikkhu became a regular member of the Saṅgha. He could take part in all the proceedings of the Saṅgha, but could not undertake the task of training the novices without passing ten years as a fully ordained monk.¹⁰

Uposatha. Long before Buddhism came into existence, the Brāhmaṇas observed the ceremony called *upavasatha* or *upavāsa* (fasting). There were two fortnightly sacrifices, one to the new moon (*Darśa*) and the other to the full moon (*Pūrṇamāsa*). The day preceding these was regarded as a preparatory day, on which observances, i.e. *vrata*, such as fasting, rest from work, abstention from enjoyment of pleasures and retirement at night to the room where the sacrificial fire was maintained for the whole night. Hence the *vrata* day was also called the day of *upavasatha*. The Brāhmaṇic ceremonies of Darśapūrṇamāsa sacrifices and of fasting were observed by the different classes of Śramaṇas.¹¹

About the time of the advent of Buddhism, the word

8 SBE, Vol. XIII, p. 170; MV, I.28.2.29.—*anujānāmi bhikkhave ñatthi-catutthena kammēna upasampadetum. suṇātu me bhante saṅgho. ayaṃ itthannāmo itthannāmasa āyasmato upasampadāpekkho. yadi saṅghassa pattakallāṃ saṅgho itthannāmaṃ upasampādeyya itthannāmena upajjhāyena. esā ñattī.....yass=āyasmato khamati itthannāmassa upasampadā itthannāmena upajjhāyena, so tuṇhassa, yassa na khamati so bhāseyya...dutiyaṃ pi etaṃ atthaṃ vadāmi...tatiyaṃ pi etaṃ atthaṃ vadāmi.*

9 MV, I.36.1.

10 Ibid., I.32.1.

11 Dutt, *op. cit.*, p. 72 ; SBE, Vol. XIII, intro., p. x.

uposatha had come to mean the day preceding four stages of the moon's waxing and waning, viz., the 1st, 8th, 15th and 23rd nights of the lunar month, that is to say, a weekly sacred day, a sabbath.¹² As a matter of practice, only two of these days, viz., the new moon and full moon, were observed as Uposatha by the Buddhists.

It is said that the introduction of Uposatha for recital of the *Pātimokkha Sutta* among the monks took place at the instance of king Bimbisāra.¹³ The monks present were asked to confess their guilt if committed during the preceding fortnight. If the monks remained silent, then the recitation of the *Pātimokkha* was regarded as complete. After this the discussion on Dhamma and Vinaya was taken up.

Before the recitation, such preliminaries as sweeping of the Uposatha hall, provision of seats, lamps and drinking water, formal announcement of the day, declaration of *parisuddhi* of all the members, selection of two monks to put and answer questions relating to Dhamma and Vinaya were to be attended.¹⁴

The Bhikkhus were required to attend the assembly fully dressed (*ticīvareṇa avippavāsa*)¹⁵ and to recite the rules of the *Pātimokkha* in extenso. In case of danger to life, full recitation of the *Pātimokkha Sutta* could be avoided and it could be abridged.¹⁶

Vassāvāsa. The rule that the wanderer must suspend wandering and remain in retreat during the season of rains occurs among the Canonical regulations of different sects. The Buddhists call it Vassa and the Jains Pajjusana. Vassa was ordained among the Buddhists because the people complained to the Buddha that, if the Buddhist priests travelled during the rainy season, they would be crushing green herbs in the field,

12 See Childers, *Pali-English Dictionary*, p. 151. [See *uposatha* at pp. 535-36.—Ed.]

13 *MV*, II.1.4.

14 *Ibid.*, II.15.11 ; II.17.3 ; II.9 ; II.20.5.

15 *Ibid.*, II.12.1.

16 *Ibid.*, II.15.4.

hurting vegetable life and destroying the life of many small living things.¹⁷

The period fixed by the Buddha for entering upon Vassa were two, the earlier and later. The earlier date for entering upon Vassa is the day after the full moon of Āṣāḍha (June-July); the later, a month after the full moon of Āṣāḍha.¹⁸ Probably this double period is connected with the double period prescribed in the Brāhmaṇas and Sūtras for most of the Vedic festivals. Thus the *Varuṇapraghāsas*, with which the Brāhmaṇas began the rainy season, had to be held either on the full moon day of Āṣāḍha or on the full moon day of the following month, Śrāvaṇa, quite in accordance with the Buddhist rules about Vassupanāyikā.¹⁹

No Bhikkhu was to go on his travels till he had kept the Vassa during the earlier or later three months.²⁰ The rules for the celebration of Vassa are contained in the third Khandaka of the *Mahāvagga*. By order of the king, the retreat might have commenced later on.²¹ A Bhikkhu might leave his *vihāra*, if sent for, but not for a longer period than seven days.

Pavāraṇā. The ceremony of Pavāraṇā was performed at the end of the Vassāvāsa. The object of the ceremony was to

17 SBE, Vol. XIII, p. 298; MV, III.3.1-4—*manussā ujjhāyanti khīyanti vipācenti....ime pana samaṇā Sakyaputtiyā hemantaṃ pi gīmaṃ pi vassaṃ pi cārikaṃ caranti haritāni tiṇāni sammaddantā ekindriyaṃ jīvaṃ viheṭhentā bahū khuddake pāṇe saṃghātaṃ āpādentā ti.*

18 SBE, Vol. XIII, pp. 299-300; MV, III.3.1-4—*dv=emā bhikkhave vassupanāyikā purimikā pacchimikā ti. aparajjugatāya āsāḥhiyā purimikā upagantabbā, māsagatāya āsāḥhiyā pacchimikā upagantabbā. imā kho bhikkhave dve vassupanāyikā ti.*

19 SBE, Vol. XIII, p. 300 and note.

20 SBE, XIII, p. 301; MV, III.3.1-4—*na bhikkhave vassaṃ upagantvā purimaṃ vā temāsaṃ pacchimaṃ vā temāsaṃ avasitvā cārikā pakkamitabbā yo pakkameyya āpatti dukkaṭassā ti.* "Let no one, O Bhikkhus, who has entered upon Vassa, go on his travels before he has kept Vassa during the earlier or during the later three months. He who does so, commits a *dukkata* offence." [Some authorities mention the duration of *vassa* as four months. Cf. Childers, *op. cit.*, s.v. *vassa*.—Ed.]

21 MV, III. 3.1.4; SBE, Vol. XIII, p. 301.

confess sins of all kinds (seen, heard or apprehended)²² that might have been committed during the Vassāvāsa.²³ This solemn termination of Vassa is inaugurated by an act of the Saṅgha in an assembly of the chapter of at least five monks.²⁴ The fourteenth and fifteenth days of the half month were the Pavāraṇā days.²⁵ We are told, "Let them hold Pavāraṇā, O Bhikkhus, in this way. Let a learned, competent Bhikkhu proclaim the following *ñatti* before those Bhikkhus : 'Hear me, Sirs. Today is the Pavāraṇā day. If you are ready, Sirs, let us hold Pavāraṇā with one another.' Then let the Senior Bhikkhu adjust his upper robe and say to those Bhikkhus : 'I pronounce my Pavāraṇā, friends, before you, by what has been or by what has been heard or by what is suspected ; may you speak to me, Sirs, out of compassion towards me ; if I see [an offence], I will atone for it. And for the second time, if I see... ; and for the third time, if I see...' "²⁶

Kaṭhina. Immediately after the Pavāraṇā, there was distribution of robes, which is called Kaṭhina.²⁷ The Kaṭhina (literally 'hard') is the stock of cotton cloth provided by the faithful to be made up into robes for the use of the Saṅgha during the ensuing year. This cotton cloth must be dyed, sewn together and made into robes and then formally declared to be available for

22 *MV*, III.5.1-6 ; *SBE*, Vol. XIII, p. 303.

23 *MV*, IV. 1.11-14—*anujānāmi bhikkhave vassam vutthānam bhikkhūnam tihī ṭhānehi pavāretum diṭṭhena vā sutena vā parisamkāya*.

24 *MV*, IV. 4.3-5.4—*anujānāmi bhikkhave pañcannam saṃghe pavāretum=ti*.

25 *SBE*, Vol. XIII, p. 331 ; *MV*, IV. 3—*dv=emā bhikkhave pavāraṇā... catuddasikā ca...* "The fourteenth and fifteenth [of a half month] are the two Pavāraṇā days." [But see what has been said above, p. 42.—Ed.]

26 *SBE*, Vol. XIII, p. 333 ; *MV*, IV.5.4-9—*evaṃ=ca pana bhikkhave pavāretabban. therena bhikkhuṇā ekaṃsam uttarāsaṃgam karitvā ukkuṭikam nisiditvā añjalim paggahetvā navo bhikkhu evaṃ assa vacanīyo : aham āvuso āyasmantaṃ pavāremi diṭṭhena vā sutena vā parisamkāya vā vadatu maṃ āyasmā anukampaṃ upādāya, passanto paṭikarissāmi. dutiyam pi...titiyaṃ pi...*

27 *MV*, VII 1.2-5—*anujānāmi bhikkhave vassam vutthānam bhikkhūnam kaṭhinam attharitam*.

immediate distribution all on one and the same day.²⁸ The performance of this ceremony is described as follows. "Let a learned, competent Bhikkhu proclaim the following *ñatti* before the Saṅgha: 'This Kaṭhina-cloth has become the property of the Saṅgha. If the Saṅgha is ready, let the Saṅgha hand over the Kaṭhina-cloth to such and such a Bhikkhu to spread out the Kaṭhina. This is the *ñatti*.... This Kaṭhina cloth has become the property of the Saṅgha.....If the Saṅgha approves of the handing over of the Kaṭhina to such and such a Bhikkhu for spreading it out, let it remain silent. The Saṅgha approves thereof..... Thus I understand.'²⁹

28 SBE, Vol. XVII, p. 149, note.

29 Ibid., p. 152; MV, VII, 1.2-5—*suṇātu me bhante saṅgho. idaṃ saṅghassa kaṭhinadussāṃ uppannaṃ. yadi saṅghassa pattakallaṃ, saṅgho imaṃ kaṭhinadussāṃ itthannāmassa bhikkhuṃ deti kaṭhinaṃ attharituṃ. yassa=āyasmato khamati imassa kaṭhinadussassa itthannāmassa bhikkhuṃ dānaṃ kaṭhinaṃ attharituṃ so tuṇhassa. yassa na khamati so bhāseyya... evaṃ etaṃ dhārayāmi=iti.*

VI

RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS OF ANCIENT INDIA*

Asim Kumar Chatterjee, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC,
Calcutta University

The people of ancient India were addicted to hunting, gambling, chariot-racing and a host of other amusements,¹ and were, by and large, festival-minded. The R̥gvedic word for festival is *samana* which has been rendered as both 'battle' and 'festival' in the *St. Petersburg Dictionary*.² According to Pischel, the word meant a general popular festivity to which women went to enjoy themselves,³ the poets to win fame, bowmen to gain prizes in archery and horses to run races. Both young and elderly women sought there to find a spouse and courtesans to make profit on the occasion.⁴ The word has been used a number of times in both the *R̥gveda*⁵ and the *Atharvaveda*.⁶ It is, however, doubtful whether the so-called R̥gvedic festivals had any religious bias. Pischel, Geldner and Roth, the three authorities quoted in the *Vedic Index*, do not appear to attach any religious colouring to the word as found in the early Vedic texts.

In the later Vedic and especially in the Vedāṅga or Sūtra literature, we have frequent references to festivals or ceremonies connected with such popular figures of the later Vedic pantheon as Indra, Paśupati and Agni. We have also references to rites connected with the worship of snakes. The ceremonies mentioned in the Sūtra texts were mostly domestic

*[The revised copy of the paper was received in September, 1971.—Ed.]

1 See *CHI*, Vol. I, pp. 100 ff.

2 See Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 429.

3 *Vedische Studien*, Vol. II, p. 314.

4 Macdonell and Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 429.

5 II. 16.17; VI. 60.2; VII. 2.5; VIII. 12.9; IX. 94.47; X. 55.5;
8 .10; 168.2. For some other references, see *Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p. 429.

6 II.36.1; VI. 92.2; etc.

and were connected with particular seasons of the year. The Āśvayuja festival, as the name indicates, was celebrated in the autumnal month of Āśvayuja or Āśvina. Both the *Āśvalāyana*⁷ and *Gobhila Grhyasūtras*⁸ connect this festival with the god Paśupati also called Śiva or Śaṅkara. We are told that the householder should adorn his house on this occasion and, after taking his bath, should put on clean garments.

In the *Śāṅkhāyana*⁹ and *Pāraskara*¹⁰ *Grhyasūtras*, however, this particular festival has been connected with the most powerful Vedic god, viz., Indra. In the first,¹¹ again, we have been told about the Caitra festival connected with the three major gods of the later Vedic period, viz., Agni, Rudra and Indra. Apparently it is also mentioned as the famous Spring-festival in the *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra*.¹² According to Haradatta,¹³ it falls on the 13th of the first half of Caitra, about the beginning of April. In the *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa*,¹⁴ mention is made of the Spring-festival on the full-moon of the month of Agra-hāyana or Mārgaśīrṣa. It is difficult to explain why there was a Spring-festival in that winter month. In the *Grhyasūtras* of Śāṅkhāyana,¹⁵ *Āśvalāyana*¹⁶ and *Pāraskara*,¹⁷ we come across the festival or ceremony connected with snakes. It is interesting to note that this snake festival was held in the rainy month of Śrāvaṇa when there is a danger of death from snake-bite.

We have already pointed out that most of the later Vedic ceremonies were more or less domestic. Some of them became popular at a later period. The Indramaha or Indramahotsava

7 II. 2.3 ; see also *SBE*, Vol. XXX, p. 203.

8 III 8.1.

9 IV. 16.1.

10 II. 16.2.

11 IV. 19.1-4.

12 I. 3.20 ; see also *SBE*, Vol. II, p. 42, note.

13 *Loc. cit.*

14 24.32.

15 IV. 15.1 ff

16 II. 1.9 ff.

17 II. 4.

festival was in all probability the earliest* festival celebrated by the people in general. It is mentioned both in the *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa*¹⁸ and also in the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*¹⁹ of the *Atharvaveda*. We, however, do not get any details about this festival in those works.

The *Mahābhārata* contains a few definite references to religious festivals in which the masses took part. The first is found in connexion with the festival in honour of the god Paśupati at the town of Vāraṇāvata. The relevant lines are quoted below—

*ayam samājah sumahān ramaṇīyatamo bhuvi/
upasthitaḥ Paśupater=nagare Vāraṇāvate//
sarva-ratna-samākīrṇe puṁsām deśe manoramam*||²⁰

This is the first definite mention of the word *samāja* in the sense of a festival.** We have already seen that, in the Sūtra literature, householders are described as celebrating festivals in honour of this god in connexion with the Āśvayuja ceremony in Āśvina. The lines, quoted above, show that all the people of Vāraṇāvata participated in the festival of Paśupati. We further learn from a subsequent verse that Brāhmaṇas and singers (*gāyanāḥ*) had assembled in that particular town with the avowed object of taking part in the festival of Paśupati and also to receive rewards.²¹ There cannot be any doubt, therefore, that the festival of Paśupati at that town was an annual *melā* type of assembly in which every one, irrespective of his or her status, participated.

*[It is not beyond doubt.—Ed.]

18 140.16.

19 No. 19. [Read *Atharvaveda-pariśiṣṭas*.—Ed.]

20 Cr. ed., I. 131.3-4. Other references are also from the same edition.

**[It was a kind of big fair held on the occasion of the god's worship. Aśoka's RE I uses the word apparently in the same sense. Such a *samāja* is also mentioned in the fairly early *Apastamba Dharmasūtra*. It is called *utsavasamāja* in the Nasik *praśasti* of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi and the Hathigumpha inscription of Khāravela as well as in literature (cf. *Daśakumāracarita*, ed. Jivananda, p. 230).—Ed.]

21 Verse No. 9—

*Brāhmaṇebhyaś=ca ratnāni gāyanebhyaś=ca sarvaśaḥ/
prayacchadhvaṁ yathākāmaṁ devā iva suvarcaśaḥ//*

A more comprehensive description of such a *samāja* is found in another place of the *Mahābhārata*.²² This was the festival in honour of the god Brahman at Virāṭanagara, also called Matsyanagara, held in the fourth month of the *ajñāta-vāsa* period of the Pāṇḍavas. We are told that athletes from all quarters by thousands arrived at the Matsya capital to witness that festival. We are further informed that those fair-limbed men were adequately honoured by the Matsya king (*rājñā samabhipūjitāḥ*).²³ It is obvious that the festival of the god Brahman in the Matsya country was almost an all-India affair* in which thousands of people took part; otherwise it would be difficult to explain the presence of so many thousands of wrestlers from all parts of the country. We have already noticed that, in connexion with the festival of Paśupati, the Brāhmaṇas and singers are mentioned. Now, in connexion with the festival of the lord Brahman, we find wrestlers taking part. So it would not be wrong to conjecture that such a *samāja* in the days of the composition of the *Mahābhārata* was both a religious and cultural affair. We will see presently that this cultural aspect of the *samājas* was never forgotten in later days.

The third reference to a festival or *samāja* in the *Mahābhārata*²⁴ also has a distinctly cultural note. This festival was held before the marriage ceremony of Draupadī and lasted for sixteen days. We further learn that *naṭas* (actors), *nartakas* (dancers), *vaitālikas*, *sūtas*, *māgadhas* and *niyodhakas* (wrestlers) took part in that festival.²⁵ The Brāhmaṇas and other poor

22 IV. 12.12-13—

*atha māse caturthe tu Brahmaṇaḥ sumahotsavaḥ/
āsīt samṛddho Matsyeṣu puruṣāṇāṃ susaṃmataḥ//
tatra mallāḥ samāpetur=digbhyo rājan sahasraśaḥ//*

23 IV. 12.16.

*[It is an exaggeration in our opinion.—Ed.]

24 I. 176.28-29.

25 I. 175.16—

*naṭā vaitālikāś=c=aiva nartakāḥ sūta-māgadhaḥ/
niyodhakāś=ca deśebhyaḥ sameṣyanti mahābalāḥ//*

people flocked to the Pañcāla capital in the hope of receiving gifts²⁶ in the festival which was attended by young heroes of many countries.²⁷ Unlike the festival at Vāraṇāvata and Virāṭanagara, this was essentially a secular type of congress. There cannot be any doubt that such a festival used to cost the host (in this case, the king of Pañcāla) a great amount of money since he had to make arrangements for the food and lodging of all the guests.²⁸ The kings of ancient India, however, were usually known for their munificence and never disappointed guests and Brāhmaṇas.**

The early Buddhist texts contain a lot of information about festivals. The *Mahāvagga* which was probably composed a few centuries before the beginning of the Christian era²⁹ refer to the festivals in which even children used to take part, decked with ornaments and garlands.³⁰ In the *Cullavagga*, we are told of a certain festival on the mountain-top of Rājagaha (Rājagṛha) which was even attended by high royal officials for whom separate sitting arrangements were also made. For the ceremonial purpose a kind of white cloth called *cela* was laid out and it gave a festive or decorative appearance to the whole house.³¹ Sometimes the buildings or *maṇḍapas* erected in special honour of the guests were covered with lengths of cotton cloth.³²

Among the festivals specially mentioned in the Jātakas, the most important was the Pavāraṇā usually celebrated after the

26 I. 175.2 ff.

27 I. 175.13.

28 I. 176.15 ff.

**[Kings Khāravēla and Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi are known to have held *samājas* for the entertainment of the people.—Ed.]

29 For the date of this and the *Cullavagga*, see *SBE*, Vol. XIII, intro., pp. xxi ff.

30 VI. 15.5.

31 V. 2.6; 21.3.; VI. 2.7. See also *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, VI. 26. See in this connexion Rhys Davids' note in *Buddhist Suttas*, p. 122.

32 See *SBE*, Vol. XX, pp. 127-29.

end of the rainy season.³³ It was characterised by a grand feast which was evidently attended by all monks including the Buddha.³⁴ The Jātakas also mention the elephant-festival not referred to in the earliest Buddhist texts. In the *Susīma Jātaka* (No. 163), we have a description of this festival as follows.—“A hundred elephants were set in array with golden trappings, golden flags, all covered with a net-work of fine gold, and all the palace courtyard was decked out. There stood the Brāhmaṇas in all their fine gala dress, thinking to themselves, ‘Now we shall do the ceremony; we shall do it.’ Presently came the king, in all his splendour and with him the ornaments and other things that were used.”³⁵ We are told that none could conduct the festival unless he knew the three Vedas³⁶ by heart and the elephant-lore.³⁷ It is well known that elephants are held in special esteem by the Buddha and his followers. In a number of Jātakas, the Bodhisattva is described as being born as an elephant.³⁸ We have references in the Jātakas to general festivals of ‘gods’ in which people used to show their respect to them. In such festivals, we are told in the *Dummedha Jātaka* (No. 50), hundreds of sheep, goats, poultry, swine and other living creatures were massacred, and the rites were performed with gory carcasses.³⁹ It is natural that the Buddha or his followers, who were against Brāhmaṇical sacrifice, should raise their voice against such festivals which were accompanied with bloodshed. The same Jātaka relates how the Bodhisattva, born as the prince of Banaras, successfully persuaded the Brāhmaṇas and others to

33 See *Mahāvagga*, IV. 1; and *Jātaka Stories*, ed. Cowell, Vol. I, pp. 73, 91, 172; Vol. III, pp. 160, 205; Vol. IV, p. 168.

34 Jātaka No. 483.

35 Cowell, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 33.

36 *Loc. cit.*

37 *Ibid.*, p. 32, note.

38 Cf. *Silavanāga Jātaka* (No. 72); *Dummedha Jātaka* (No. 122); *Kāsavā Jātaka* (No. 221); *Kakkaṭṭha Jātaka* (No. 267); *Laṭukika Jātaka* (No. 357); *Mātuposaka Jātaka* (No. 455); *Chaddanta Jātaka* (No. 514).

39 See Cowell, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 126 ff.

give up such bloody practices. The abhorrence of the Buddhists for such practices is also to be found in Aśoka's famous words *na ca samāja katavyo* recorded in his First Rock Edict.⁴⁰ But Aśoka was not the first to speak against religious festivals which resulted in the killing of a large number of innocent animals. We have in the *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra*⁴¹ words which almost sound like those of Aśoka. It expressly advises people to refrain from attending assemblies and festivals (*sabhāḥ samājāś=ca*). Evidently the mass-killing of animals was not liked by either Buddhists or thoughtful Brāhmaṇas.⁴² But ordinary religious festivals which were accompanied with music, singing, feasting and dancing were not disliked even by the Buddhists as would be evident from the general references to them in their works, some of which have already been quoted.

Among such festivals which were not probably connected with bloodshed, mention may be made of the Kattikā referred to in the Jātakas.⁴³ This was held every third year in the month of Kārttika (October-November)⁴⁴ and at night.⁴⁵ In the *Sanjīva Jātaka* (No. 150), we are told that at the time of this festival the city of Rājagaha was illuminated and adorned like the city of the gods.⁴⁶ Persons belonging to all ranks used to participate in it and women, in beautiful coloured cloth used to go about at the festival hanging round the neck

40 See CII, Vol. I, p. 1 ; see also Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, p. 16, note 3.

41 I. II. 32 ; see also Kane, *Hist. Dharm.*, Vol. V, Part II, p. 1017. [The Dharmasūtra of Āpastamba is assigned to the 5th or 4th century B.C. by Winternitz (*HIL*, Vol., I, p. 519), but to a date not earlier than the 2nd century B.C. by Hopkins (*CHI*, Vol. I, p. 249).—Ed.]

42 There are hundreds of passages in the *Māhābhārata* against animal sacrifice. [Read 'many' for 'hundreds of'.—Ed.]

43 See Cowell, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 261, 312, 313, 320 ; Vol. II, p. 254 ; Vol. V, p. 109.

44 See Jātaka No. 276 (*Kurudhamma Jātaka*).

45 Jātaka Nos. 150 and 527.

46 Cowell, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 320.

of their husbands.⁴⁷ There is little doubt that the Kattikā festival was unlike ordinary *samājas* mentioned in the inscriptions of Aśoka.

The Jain *Āyāraṅga Sutta*,⁴⁸ which is certainly a pre-Christian work,⁴⁹ has an exhaustive list of festivals observed by the people. This includes the festivals in honour of Indra, Skanda, Rudra, Mukunda, demons, Yakṣas, Snakes, tomb, shrine, tree, hill, cave, well, tank, pond, river, lake, sea and mine. We are further informed that, at them, many Śramaṇas are entertained with food. The Jain text further directs the monks to avoid such festivals. We have already observed that festivals were held in ancient times in honour of Indra, Rudra and the snakes. The *Āyāraṅga Sutta* shows that festivals were also held in honour of the god Mukunda, i.e. Viṣṇu, and Skanda.⁵⁰ Regarding the Indra-festival we have the evidences of the *Harivaṃśa*, *Buddhacarita*⁵¹ and *Kathāsaritsāgara*.⁵² The first of these works explain in some details the significance of Indrotsava. We are told that, as Indra is the lord of clouds, he is the special favourite of farmers and shepherds. That work further attests to the great popularity of this festival all over India.* The references to it in the *Buddhacarita* and the *Kathāsaritsāgara* also prove the great popularity of this festival. We learn from the *Harivaṃśa*⁵³ that it was generally held at the end of the second month of the rainy season, i.e. the beginning of the month of Bhādra. The festival in honour of Viṣṇu, referred to above, is still popular under various names in every part of India.

Regarding the festival of snakes, mentioned in the Sūtra

47 See No. 147 (*Puppharatta Jātaka*).

48 See *SBE*, Vol. XXII, pp. 92-93.

49 For the date of its composition, see Jacobi, *SBE*, Vol. XXII, intro., pp. xxxix ff.

50 See II, Ch. 16.

51 I. 63; see also *SBE*, Vol. XLIX(i), p. 11.

52 Ed. Durgadas and Parab, I. 4.3—

Indrotsvaṃ kadācic=ca prekṣituṃ nīrgatā vāyam.

*[This seems to be an exaggeration.—Ed.]

53 II. 16.1.

literature and the above-quoted Jain text, it may be pointed out that, in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, there is reference to a festival in honour of the snake-god Vāsuki⁵⁴ whose golden image was worshipped during the festival. The festival connected with snakes is also mentioned in the Brāhma-parvan of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*⁵⁵ in what is the earliest part of that Purāṇa.

Somadeva's *Kathāsaritsāgara*⁵⁶ also tells us about the festival of Vināyaka or Gaṇeśa who sprang into prominence only in the post-Christian period.⁵⁷ While describing the festival of Gaṇeśa (*yātr-otsava*), the poet speaks of the worship of the golden image (*ratna-Vināyaka*).⁵⁸

The spring-festival, which is mentioned for the first time in the *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra*, was one of the popular festivals of ancient India. Vasant-otsava is frequently mentioned in the Classical Sanskrit texts. In the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, there is a pointed reference to this festival.⁵⁹ According to the *Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa*,⁶⁰ this festival was celebrated in honour of a demoness called Hoḍikā who harass new-born babes.* We are also told that the festival lasted from the full-moon day of Phālguna (*Phālguna-paurṇamāsī*) to Pañcamī.

The famous Kaumudī festival, mentioned in the *Mudrārākṣasa*⁶¹ and other Classical Sanskrit texts, was also another

54 The actual expression used in connexion with this festival is *yātr-otsava*. See *Kathāsaritsāgara*, XII. 7.208. See also the subsequent verses. The expression *yātrā-mahotsava* also occurs in the *Pañcatantra* (I. 5), ed. K. P. Parab.

55 32.1—

Pañcamī dayitā rājan=nāgānām nāndīvardhinī|
pañcamyām kila nāgānām bhavat=īty=utsavo mahān||

56 XII. 6.327.

57 It is only in the latest parts of the *Mahābhārata* that Gaṇapati or Gaṇeśa is mentioned by name. He is pictured in those places as an amanuensis.

58 XII. 6.327. [*Ratna* is not 'gold', but 'jewel'.—Ed.]

59 I. 4.49.

60 See *Hemādrikhaṇḍa*.

*[*Hoḍikā* is the same as *Holikā* (also called *Holākā*), modern *Holi*.—Ed.]

61 Ed. M. R. Kale, pp. 150, 216.

very popular festival. The *Mudrārākṣasa* attests to its popularity among the citizens of Kusumapura (Pāṭaliputra). We further learn from the same work that it was celebrated after the rains in autumn. In the *Jātakamālā*⁶² of Āryaśūra,⁶³ we have a description of the Kaumudī festival at Śrāvastī. The relevant lines run as follows.—“Its streets and squares had been sprinkled and cleansed ; the grounds were strewn with many coloured flowers. Gay flags and flowers were floating aloft ; everywhere there was dancing and singing, representation of burlesques, ballets and music ; the mingled scents of flowers, incense, odoriferous powders, perfumes, garlands, strong liquors, also of the perfumed water and ointments used in ablutions filled the air with fragrance. Lovely articles were being exposed for sale ; the principal streets were thronged by a merry crowd of townsmen and landsmen* in their chaste dress.”

The *Daśakumāracarita* of Daṇḍin, a work of the early mediaeval period, mentions two festivals, one celebrated in Śrāvastī and the second at Dāmalipta in the Suhma country. The festival of Śrāvastī was connected with the god Tryambaka (Śiva),⁶⁴ and the other at Dāmalipta (Tāmralipta, modern Tamluk), known as Kanduk-otsava, is expressly connected with the goddess Vindhyavāsini⁶⁵ (another name of Durgā) whose original shrine is still to be seen near Mirzapur in U. P. In the festival as described by Daṇḍin, the chief participant was the princess of Dāmalipta who herself was an expert in the game of *kanduka*.⁶⁶

There are references to a few non-religious festivals in the

62 Ed. P. L. Vaidya (1959), No. 13, p. 85.

63 He probably flourished in the 4th century A.D. See Vaidya's introd., *ibid.*, p. ix.

*[Better—people of the countryside.—Ed.]

64 Uttarapīṭhikā, 5th *Ucchvāsa*. See also the Chowkhamba ed. of that work, p. 331.

65 See Uttarapīṭhikā, 6th *Ucchvāsa* ; see also the Chowkhamba ed. of the *Daśakumāracarita*, pp. 319 ff.

66 Chowkhamba ed., pp. 326 ff.

Jātakas. The *Mahānāradakassapa Jātaka* (No. 544) describes a festival which was held on the full-moon day of Śrāvaṇa at the city of Mithilā.⁶⁷ The city and the palace were adorned on that occasion like the city of gods. The Jātakas also frequently mention the drinking-festival.⁶⁸ It was a popular ceremony in the days of the composition of the Jātakas.

⁶⁷ Cowell, *op. cit.*, Vol. VI, pp. 115 ff.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 208 ; Vol. IV, p. 73 ; Vol. V, pp. 5, 252 ; Vol. VI, p. 83.

VII

THE ROLE OF ATHEISM IN INDIAN THOUGHT*

N. N. Bhattacharya, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC,
Calcutta University

"The dominant character of the Indian mind", says Radhakrishnan, "which has coloured all its culture and moulded all its thought is the spiritual tendency. Spiritual experience is the foundation of India's rich cultural history..."¹ "For the Hindus, a system of philosophy is an insight, a *darśana*. To know God is to become divine, free from any outside influence."² This fiction of spiritualism is claimed over and over again as the basic characteristic of Indian philosophy. Many writers on this subject have depended on this popular myth about Indian philosophy and not on the philosophical materials themselves.

The assertion that most of our traditional philosophers were stark atheists is likely to appear strange and even fanciful; but the fact remains that only two of the major philosophies can be considered pseudo-theistic, while the others are frankly atheistic. Of the pseudo-theistic philosophies, the Vedānta holds that the power of creation belongs to the pure, stainless *brahman* that for its own sport develops itself into the world without undergoing the least change. Unless the *brahman*, as the material and efficient cause, transforms itself into the world, creation cannot take place, and if it does so, it ceases to be *brahman*. In other words, the changing and impermanent world cannot be the effect of an eternal and changeless cause. Thus, in order to avoid this contradiction, the Vedantists found it necessary to posit *prakṛti* or *māyā* by the side of

*[The revised copy of the paper was received on 4.10.71. See above, p. 3. See also *JAIH*, Vol. IV, p. 291.—Ed.]

1 *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 41.

2 *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 128.

brahman. But to do so is to establish another contradiction, to limit the nature of *brahman* which has no second. Thus as the only way out, the *saguṇa* or changing *brahman* is conceived, who as *Īśvara* combines within himself the unattached *brahman* and the unconscious *prakṛti* or *māyā*. This *Īśvara* has again to be declared as unreal, like the world, because of his finite existence.³

The earlier exponents of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school excluded God from their system ; but the later ones, finding this fault in their *gurus*, became great champions of theism. According to them, the world has the atoms for its material cause and God for the efficient. The atoms can act only when, prior to the beginning of creation, they are controlled by an intelligent being. God creates the world for the sake of making the beings experience the fruits of the actions of their past lives. The creation and destruction of the world follow one another in regular order. The periodic dissolution of the world is brought about by God's desire to reabsorb the whole creation within himself.⁴

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika views of creation are refuted by the Mīmāṃsakas on the following grounds. Firstly, as Kumārila

3 The first part of Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahmasūtra* deals with the nature of *brahman* and its relation to the world. See also Śaṅkara's com. on *BS*, I. 1.22, I. 3.41, I. 4.3, II. 1.14-25, II. 2.22, II. 3.7.13. The theistic interpreters of the Vedānta were not at all troubled about the question how the world of imperfection could take its rise from *brahman*, the absolute perfection, since they were willing to accept, on the authority of the Śruti, that the finite might spring from the infinite. In the terminology of later Vedānta, the universe on the *saprapañca* (material) view is a *pariṇāma* (transformation) of *brahman*, while on the *nīṣprapañca* (immaterial), it is a *vivarta* (transfiguration) thereof. It was left to the later philosophers like Rāmānuja to interpret this *brahman* in a strictly theistic sense. On the other hand, according to Śaṅkara and his followers, the world itself is looked at as illusory, and hence there can be no question of any real creation thereof, and practically no scope for admitting any actual creator.

4 *Nyāyabhāṣya* of Vātsyāyana, I. 1.9 ; III. 2.12.12 ; IV. 1.14-40 ; IV. 2.26-33 ; Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 71 ff. ; Tarkalankar, *Fellowship Lecture*, Vol. I, pp. 77 ff. ; Garbe, *Philosophy of Ancient India*, p.23; also see Chattopadhyaya and Gangopadhyaya, *Nyāya Darśana*.

says in his *Ślokavārttika*, the idea of a supreme being creating the world cannot explain the conditions prior to creation. The affair of creation cannot be the will of God, because creation involves a process. God cannot create out of pity, since there was no being to whom compassion could be shown. If the creation is said to be for the amusement of God, then it contradicts the theory that he is perfect. Secondly, the idea of the utter dissolution of the world (*pralaya*) cannot be admitted because it is not supported by experience. Thirdly, it is said that the world is created by an intelligent being, just as a potter makes a pot out of different materials; even this cannot be any argument, because once taken that the pot is the creation of the potter, it obviously implies that God cannot create the pot, and if God is put in that role, the potter's role is then to be denied. Again, if it is said that the potter is a bad analogy, since the nature of the work of God and that of the potter is different, and that the atoms perform the work of creation guided by the will of God, it is also illogical because the atoms are devoid of intelligence and it is impossible on their part to follow, even to understand, the will of God. Therefore, according to the *Mīmāṃsakas*, perception, inference and scriptures, do not prove the existence of God. God cannot act as the supervisor of *dharma* and *adharma* since he cannot have any knowledge of them. The universe having neither beginning nor end does not require any creator.⁵

According to the *Sāṅkhya*, the assumption of God is ontologically irrelevant and logically repulsive because it is unproved. There are two principles, *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. The latter is the primordial matter, characterised by the equilibrium of the three qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* from which everything of the world is produced. *Puruṣa* is characterised by plurality, passivity and indifference, but somehow comes to be influenced by the three qualities of *prakṛti*. The whole of the cosmos exists in a subtle (*sūkṣma*) form in *prakṛti* and

5 See Jha's translation of the *Ślokavārttika*; Keith, *The Karma Mīmāṃsā*, pp. 61 ff.; Jha, *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā and its Sources*, pp. 43 ff.

becomes manifest in creation. According to the Sāṅkhya, creation is only the unmanifest becoming manifest, the *avyakta* becoming *vyakta*. The Sāṅkhya preaches a law of causation, known as *pariṇāma-vāda*, according to which the effect is a real modification of the cause. The primordial matter moved by the laws of motion inherent within it transforms itself into the world. Hence it is redundant to admit the existence of God.⁶

God has no room also in the philosophical system of the Jains. According to the Jain doctrine, substance is that which always exists, as the universe, which has no beginning or end. Existing things are considered to be permanent as regards their substance and accidental as regards their changeable aspects. The whole world of being is traced to the everlasting, uncreated, coexisting but independent, categories, *jīva* and *ajīva*.⁷ The Jain view towards Īśvara-vāda (doctrine of God) is reflected in Guṇaratna's *Tarkarahasyadīpikā* in which particular interest is attached to the refutation of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika proofs for the existence of God.

Earlier Buddhism recognises only five masses of elements (*khandhas*) which constitute the world. These elements are impermanent and without any substance, and therefore require no creator. Later Buddhist philosophy was divided into four schools of thought. The Vaibhāṣikas admit the reality of the world which is open to perception. They believe in four elements—the earth, water, fire and air and accept the atomic theory maintaining that the atoms can be perceived in a mass and not singly. The atoms are the same in all the elements possessing the qualities of earth, water, fire and air. The Sautrāntikas likewise admit the reality of the outer world and the atomic theory, differing only with the Vaibhāṣikas in the point of direct perception. According to Yaśomitra, the Sautrāntika commentator on Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*,

6 *Sāṅkhya Sūtra*, I. 92 ff. ; *Sāṅkhya Kārikā*, 57 ff. ; Garbe, *Sāṅkhya Pravacana Bhāṣya*, pref. ; Vedāntavāgīśa, *Sāṅkhya Darśanam* (Bengali), pp. 222 ff.

7 *Tattvārthadhigama Sūtra*, III. 6 ; Jacobi's trans. in *ZDMG*, Vol. IX.

the evolution of the world can have no beginning, since the creatures are created neither by *Īśvara*, nor by *Puruṣa*, nor by *Pradhāna* (*prakṛti*). If God was the cause of creation, then every object would have been created in its complete form and at the same time, and not through successive stages. The flowers could then come into being with their bud form and men in their adult form.⁸

The *Yogācāra* school denies the real existence of all except *viññāna* or consciousness. The external objects, according to this school, are unreal since it cannot be said whether they arise from existence or not, whether they are simple atoms or complex bodies. All things have their beings through consciousness, and no other medium is known through which they can subsist. But while the *Yogācāra* abolishes things behind the images and reduces all appearance to a series of ideas, the *Mādhyamika* goes a step further saying that even consciousness or *viññāna* is unreal. There would be no colour without the eye, and this relative existence makes everything nothing but appearance. Thus there is no God apart from the universe and no universe apart from God, and both are equally unreal. The world has no real existence, and things are neither transient nor eternal, neither produced nor destroyed, neither same nor different, neither coming forth nor passing away. It is the nature of *dharma*s (ultimate factors of existence) to be produced by concurrent causes, and what is so produced is not produced in itself, and therefore does not exist in itself.⁹

The anti-theistic arguments of the Buddha are summarised by *Aśvaghoṣa* in his *Buddhacarita* as follows.—If the world had been made by *Īśvara*, there should be no change or destruction, no such thing as sorrow or calamity, right or wrong ; if he is perfect, the world should be perfect ; if he is the maker, the world should obey him ; if he acts with a purpose, he should

8 See *Bhattacharya, Vaibhāṣika Darśana* (Bengali) and the references quoted therein.

9 *Mādhyamika Sūtra*, I ff.

not be called perfect and if he acts without a purpose, he should be called either a baby or a lunatic.¹⁰ As we have seen above, the unreality of God was exposed by the Vaibhāṣikas who believed that, if things were God's creation, they would come into being through an evolutionary process; the sprouts could then grow without the seeds, the leaves without the sprouts, the stems and branches without the leaves, the flowers without the branches, and the fruits without the flowers. God cannot be described as creator since the effect is conditioned by space and time. Śāntideva of the Mahāyāna group refuses to admit any omniscient and omnipotent God as creator, and his polemics are directed against the theism of the later Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas.¹¹ The same holds good in the case of Śāntarakṣita, in whose work we come across pointed answers to the logical grounds on which the theists, evidently the later Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, tried to prove the existence of God.¹²

The Cārvākas and Lokāyatikas believed that the world is a spontaneous growth promoted by the chance-combination of material elements, that no intervention of God is needed in creation, that the existence of consciousness is the by-product of matter and that perception is the only valid form of knowledge.¹³ Their original works being destroyed, our sources of information are the polemical works of other schools in which the views of the materialists are presented as the *pūrva-pakṣa* or 'views of the opponents', and therefore they are not free from prejudices. Undoubtedly, the Lokāyata system was based by its founders upon some deeper principles, and developed upon a more serious philosophical line than the information coming to us from their opponents.

As has been demonstrated in my *History of Indian Cosmogonical Ideas*, the problem of theistic cosmogony is that the efficient cause is always outside the effect, although it really

10 *Buddhacarita*, XVI. 18ff.

11 *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, IX. 119 ff.

12 *Tattvasaṃgraha*, 46 ff.

13 *Sarvadarśanasamgraha*, I; *Sarvasiddhāntasārasaṃgraha*, III. 7; *Prabodhacandrodaya*, Act II; etc.

contributes to its production. Every real entity is a cause and also an effect ; but the first cause as an effect has no cause, and, as such, it is no effect. This was best understood by our ancient philosophers who held that, if God might be regarded as a free agent, he could not have the desire to create, and if taken as an agent under bondage, he could not have the capacity to create. No recognised instruments of valid knowledge prove the existence of God, and it is not necessary to postulate God for evolving a rational scheme of reality and, more particularly, for solving the problem of the origin of the physical world.

Now the question is : Why, in spite of this solid theoretical basis, atheism has no practical value in Indian life ? Are we then to agree with Al-Bīrūnī on the point that the higher Hindus formed a separate privileged class and that they, in order to save their own class interest, did not care to teach the greater section of the people what they themselves learnt through study and contemplation ? This might be true to a certain extent. One should not fail to recall in this connexion that Śaṅkara, the greatest exponent of the Advaita Vedānta system, did not hesitate to declare the world unreal ; but he did hesitate to declare the unreality of the caste system. Nāgārjuna, to whom the world appeared as the daughter of a barren woman, and the worldly things as the beauty of the daughter of a barren woman, did excommunicate five hundred monks because they brought against him charges of corruption. But still the question remains, an answer to which has, of late, been suggested by Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya in his newly published work entitled *Indian Atheism* in which he argues that, in spite of their commitment to atheism, ancient Indian philosophers represented diverse world-views that were often fundamentally antagonistic to each other. Thus they defended atheism as mere atheism, i.e. without necessarily allowing it to be inextricably mixed up with their other pre-occupations. As for example, the atheism of the Mīmāṃsakas, or the Buddhists or the Jains was directed against the theism of the later

Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas ; but the source of their enthusiasm for atheism was not motivated by any philosophical consideration in the accepted sense of the term. It followed, on the contrary, what appears to have been nothing but a tendency to defend the fundamental assertions underlying their own doctrines. For those philosophers, God was simply an illusion, a subjective error which they rejected. But they did not reject the allied illusions or those belonging to their own doctrines. They were actively engaged in barricading their front doors against the possible entry of the superstitious belief in God ; but related superstitions entered their philosophies through the back-doors which they could not prevent probably because of the limitations under which they had to work, and hence they could not reach the full implications of their own atheism.¹⁴

14. *Op. cit.*, pp. 5-11.

VIII

SOME ASPECTS OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES IN ANCIENT INDIA

B. Chatterjee, Burdwan University

The discovery of the art of cultivation¹ enabled people to produce more than they could consume. The people began to appropriate to themselves, by force and violence, fields, trees, shrubs and plants. They began to snatch away the rice of others without their consent.² Fields were divided and boundaries were set up. When the means of subsistence had been provided, people were divided into four *varṇas*, namely, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra. Though the respective duties of those *varṇas* were settled, they did not properly discharge their duties.³ The evolution of Private Property, Family and the Castes is a step forward in the history of civilisation. But it gave rise to selfishness, greed, natural hatred and malice. The Śānti-parvan of the *Mahābhārata* says: 'The wealth of one is snatched away by others. He who is not a slave is made a slave. Women are forcibly abducted.'⁴ Thus originated the concept of sin, and man, conscious of sin, began to search for salvation from it.

In the *Gautama Dharmasūtra* (19.2), it is said that men in this world is polluted by a vile action, neglecting what is prescribed and practising what is forbidden. The *Yājñavalkya-smṛti* (III. 219) observes: "By omitting to do what is ordained, by resorting to do what is condemned and by not controlling the senses, man incurs fall (i.e. sin)." Similar statements are also to be found in the *Manusmṛti* (XI. 44) and the Śānti-parvan

1 *Vāyu Purāṇa*, I, Ch. 8 ; *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, Chs. 49, 51, 60, 62, 74 ; *Kūrma Purāṇa*, Ch. 29 ; cf. R. S. Sharma, *Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*, pp. 35-36.

2 *Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, Vol. IV, pp. 87-88.

Vāyu Purāṇa, I, 8.155-60.

4 Sharma, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

(34.2) of the *Mahābhārata*. It may be pointed out in this connection that the Sanskrit word *pātaka* (i.e., sin) is derived from *patana* (i.e., fall) caused by an act which transgresses social ethics. The *Bhagavadgītā* (XVI. 21) says : "This is the threefold door or entrance to Hell that is ruinous to the self, viz., lust, anger and greed ; therefore a man should shun these three." In the *Śānti-parvan* (163.7-11), it is stated that there are thirteen very powerful enemies of man beginning with anger and lust and that anger springs from covetousness which again arises from ignorance. Therefore, in the final analysis, man commits sins causing his fall due to ignorance which still remains unexplained. It is reasonable to hold that ignorance arises out of one's negligence to know, both intellectually and emotionally, one's social duties and responsibilities.

The doctrine of Karmavipāka or the ripening of evil actions or sins was well-known to the Smṛtis of Manu and Yājñavalkya. It is implied that the human beings have to experience in Heaven and Hell the consequences of their deeds.⁵ The theory occurs in the *Brahma*, *Matsya* and *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇas*, the *Avadānaśataka*, the *Suttanipāta* and the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka*.⁶ According to Manu,⁷ a man may commit sins of three kinds, viz., by the body, in words and mentally. Coveting another's wealth by unfair means, desiring that evil should befall another and persistence in false ideas—these are the three mental sins. Harshness of speech, falsehood, backbiting and irrelevant prattling—these are the four sins committed in words. Appropriating another's wealth to oneself without his consent, injury to sentient beings against the injunctions of the Śāstras, sexual intercourse with another man's wife—these three are bodily sins. The *Yogasūtra* (II. 13) informs us that the fruition of such evil deeds takes three forms, viz. *jāti* (birth in the lower castes like Caṇḍāla or in the lower order of creatures), *āyus* (short span of life) and *bhoga* (experiencing the torments of Hell).

⁵ Manu, XII. 3, 9, 54 ; Yājñavalkya, III. 206.

⁶ P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. IV, pp. 176-77.

⁷ XII. 4-7.

The ideas of Heaven full of eternal bliss and Hell with torments often occur in ancient Indian literature, both Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist.⁸ Vedic passages relate how a regular sacrificer reaches heaven.⁹ In the Vana-parvan (186.6-7) of the *Mahābhārata*, it is stated that Svarga is the place for those who die in battle. In the *Matsya* (276.17) and *Brahma* (225.6-7) *Purāṇas*, it is said that a generous donor goes to heaven where he enjoys the best pleasures. The Anuśāsana-parvan (23.84-102) enumerates actions whereby a man attains heaven. On the other hand, the *Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra* (43.32-45) gives a description of the terrible sufferings to be endured in hell by people guilty of having committed sins. According to the Purāṇic view, Svarga was a place above the earth, while Naraka was a place below the earth.

From the above discussion it transpires that the ideas of Puṇya (good deed) and Pāpa (evil action) along with those of Heaven and Hell played a dominant role in the religious life of the people in ancient India. In Aśoka's edicts,¹⁰ we find the reflection of these popular religious beliefs. Aśoka gives a list of what lead to sin (*āsinava-gāmini*—Pillar Edict III), to demerit and vice (*apuṇa, pāpa*—Rock Edict X, Pillar Edict III) and to hell (*apāya*—Separate Rock Edict). He also points out the things that lead to much good (*bahu-kayāṇa*—Pillar Edict III), to unbounded merit (*anantaṁ puṇaṁ*—Rock Edict IX) and to grand heaven (*vipula svaga*—Minor Rock Edict), a state of unbounded joy and happiness. In Pillar Edict III, it is stated that fierceness (*caṁḍiye*), cruelty (*niṭhuliye*), anger (*kodhe*), vanity (*māne*) and *isyā* (malignity) are the malevolent passions that lead to sin. In Pillar Edict II, it is pointed out that the virtues which lead to much good and less evil are pity (*dayā*), liberality (*dāna*), truthfulness (*sace*) and purity (*socaye*). The concept of virtues and vices as given in Aśoka's edicts confirms the view that the religious life in ancient India was closely

8 P. V. Kane, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, pp. 151-71.

9 *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, XII. 5.2.8 ; vide Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

10 D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, pp. 16-65; Barua, *Aśoka*, pp. 223-85.

intertwined with the prevailing social structure and the problems arising out of the rise of institutions like Private Property, Family and the Caste system.*

However, piety as envisaged in Aśoka's Pillar Edict II is attainable only by negation of sin and gradual purification. People used to perform, in ancient times, the religious practices prescribed in the Śāstras in order to attain freedom from sin. There was widespread popular faith in fasting, in worship, in offering sacrifice into fire, in making gifts to holy persons, in going on pilgrimage and bathing in holy rivers as the Ganges, and the practice of austerities and physical hardship as benefiting the spirit within.¹¹ Fasting, which means total abstinence from food and drink, is also considered as one of the *vratas*¹² and is included among austerities.¹³ The Śāntiparvan (79.18) of the *Mahābhārata*, however, says that merely fasting is not austerity which includes *ahimsā*, truthfulness, freedom from cruelty, restraint and compassion. In the Upaniṣads, *tapas* or austerity is placed over *yajña* (sacrifice).¹⁴ To offer oblations into fire (*homa*) with the purpose of liberating oneself from sins is prescribed in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (II.5.2.20), *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* (II.7-8), *Baudhāyana Dharma-sūtra* (III.7.1), *Manusmṛti* (XI. 34) and *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* (III. 309). The act of *dāna* or gifts to holy persons has been highly eulogised in the Dharmasūtras and the Smṛtis.¹⁵ In many inscriptions,¹⁶ the donor usually states that the grant is made for the increase of the merit of himself and of his parents. The *Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra* (35.6) lays down that those guilty of *mahā-pātakas* may become pure by visiting the sacred places on the

*[Of course the religious and social aspects of a people's life are inter-related; but the author does not make it clear how the concepts of Private Property and Family led to any situation peculiar to India.—Ed.]

11 P. V. Kane, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-71.

12 *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, I. 6.7. 3-4.

13 *Gautama Dharmasūtra*, 19. 11, 15 ; *Manu*, XI. 203 ; *Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra*, 54.25 ; etc.

14 *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, V. 10.1-2 ; *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, I. 2.10-11.

15 *Gautama*, XIX. 16 ; *Vasiṣṭha*, 29.16 ; *Viṣṇu*, 29.4 ; *Manu*, XI. 139.

16 D. C. Sircar, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 126-50, 170-201.

earth. The same prescription is found in the *Parāśarasmṛti* (XII.58), *Matsya Purāṇa* (184.18) and *Kūrma Purāṇa* (Pūrvārdha, 29.3).

Finally, worship to propitiate gods either through fire on the altar or through idols was a popular religious practice in ancient times. But the Vedic forms of worship, viz. Yāgas and Sattras, were monopolized by the upper three *varṇas*. The Śūdra had no right to sacrifice on account of his low birth as it is stated in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (III.2.3.9). According to the *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* (I.1.1.6), the Śūdra could not be admitted to the *upāsana* and the study of the Vedas. The *Gautama Dharmasūtra* (8.55) lays down that a Śūdra can only lead the life of a householder, and not that of the student, hermit or ascetic. The statement that the Śūdras have no religious rights is repeated in the *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* (III.262) and the *Anuśāsana-parvan* (149.13) of the *Mahābhārata*. Eggeling¹⁷ thinks that a sense of danger with which the purity of the Brāhmaṇical faith was threatened from the idolatrous practices of the aboriginal subjects, first suggested to the Brāhmaṇas the necessity of raising an insurmountable barrier between the Aryan freemen and the men of the servile class. R. S. Sharma,¹⁸ on the other hand, points out that the growth of the economic and social differentiation gradually changed the character of tribal sacrifice which tended to become individual and involved more and more gifts to the priests. In course of time, sacrifice came to be the prerogative of the higher *varṇas*, which could afford to pay for it. The two views taken together seem to suggest the correct assessment of the problem.

The rise of the Bhakti cult paved the way to religious equality in ancient India. The doctrines of Bhāgavatism, as propounded in the didactic sections of the Great Epic and the Purāṇas, show that it extended to the Śūdras and untouchables the privilege of worshipping and attaining liberation.¹⁹

17 *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XII, intro., p. xiii.

18 *Śūdras in Ancient India*, p. 79.

19 Raychaudhuri, *The Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Sect*, p. 117.

The *Bhagavadgītā* (IX. 32) states that even women and Śūdras can attain emancipation through their devotion to Kṛṣṇa-Nārāyaṇa-Vāsudeva. In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (V.1.35), it is stated that, if the person of low birth utters the name of God only once, he is liberated from bondage. The Āśvamedhika-parvan (16.22) says that a wise person should not disregard even a Caṇḍāla devotee of Viṣṇu.

The most popular belief that the remembrance of Nārāyaṇa, Hari or Kṛṣṇa removes all sins is reflected in the Purāṇas. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* states, "Of all the expiations (for sins declared by the sages) such as *tapas* (Cāndrāyaṇa, etc.) and other actions (*japa*, *homa*, gifts), the meditation on Kṛṣṇa is the highest."²⁰ The *Brahma Purāṇa* (216.87-88) lays down that men, even after committing sins many times through folly, do not go to Hell, if they prostrate before Hari who destroys all sins. Worship, beginning from the simplest *japa* consisting of repeating the name of the deity to the complicated form consisting of an elaborate arrangement for propitiating the *devatā* with a large number of *upacāras* was the most popular religious practice.

An analysis of the religious beliefs and practices shows a sincere effort of the ancient Indian people to be free from the innate proneness to sins, to attain welfare and happiness not only in this life, but also in the life beyond death. The writers of the religious literature of India impressed upon the people the ideas of Heaven and Hell, Virtue and Vice, with an intention to uphold before them a mode of life or a code of conduct which should regulate a man's work and activities as a member of the society and as an individual. Such religious functions as *vrata*, *dāna*, *tīrtha-yātrā*, *homa*, *pūjā*, etc., represent the ritualistic aspect of religious life. These purificatory religious rites were necessary to prepare men for the attainment of Sādhāraṇa or Sāmānya Dharma consisting of the moral qualities like those enunciated in Pillar Edict II of Aśoka. In fact, all writers of religious literature²¹ attached the highest importance to moral

20 P. V. Kane, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.

21 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Part I, pp. 2-11, 100-01.

qualities and prescribed them for the people of all castes. The argument that even a Śūdra of good conduct (*śīla*) can attain Brāhmaṇahood is repeatedly advanced in the Anuśāsana-parvan (143.46-50) and Vana-parvan (180.25-26) of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Bhaviṣya* (I.44.31) and *Bhāgavata* (XII.11.35) *Purāṇas*. Manu (X. 63) says that *ahimsā*, truthfulness, freedom from wrongful taking of another's possessions, purity and restraint of senses are, in brief, the common Dharmas of all *varṇas*. But with a view to guide people to the right acts in everyday life, the Dharmaśāstra writers dealt more elaborately with the religious rites and ceremonies that an individual had to practise and perform with reference to his position in society.

IX

GUARDIANS OF THE QUARTERS

D. C. Sircar, Calcutta University

Malalasekera quotes the *Dīgha-* and *Aṅguttara-nikāyas* in giving an account of the lowest Deva-world of the Buddhists, which is known as Cātummahārājika (Cāturmahārājika), where the four Mahārājas dwelt as guardians of the four quarters; e.g., Dhataratṭha (Dhṛtarāṣṭra), lord of the Gandhabbas (Gandharvas), in the east; Virūḷhaka (Virūḍhaka) lord of the Kumbhaṇḍas (Kuṣmāṇḍas), in the south; Virūpakkha (Virūpākṣa), lord of the Nāgas, in the west; and Vessavaṇa (Vaiśravaṇa-Kubera), lord of the Yakṣas, in the north.¹ Childers' *Dictionary of the Pali Language* refers to the *Abhidhānappadīpikā*, etc., and assigns Dhataratṭha to the north, Virūḷha or Virūḍhaka to the south, Virūpakkha to the west and Vessavaṇa to the east. Thus Dhataratṭha is assigned to the east or north and Vessavaṇa to the north or east. Of the four Mahārājas or guardians of the quarters, Kubera alone is known from Brāhmaṇical mythology and, as we shall see below, there also the quarter assigned to him is not the same in different accounts. The date of the evolution of the 'six Deva-world' conception and the idea of the lowest heaven called 'the world of the four Mahārājas' in the Buddhist mythology cannot be determined with certainty, because the date of the Nikāyas is uncertain.²

1 *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, s. v. Cātummahārājika, Dhataratṭha, etc.

2 The canons of the Buddhists are supposed to have been summarily compiled shortly after the Buddha's death about 486 B.C.; they were revised after a century about 386 B.C. and were more or less completed 236 years after the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa* (i.e. about the 19th year of Aśoka's reign, probably about 250 B.C.). Cf. Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, Vol. II, p. 6. The texts of the Buddhist canonical works, at first transmitted orally, are said to have been committed to writing in the first century B.C. (*ibid.*, pp. 8, 13), though they are supposed to have suffered considerable change and modification even in later times, and in many cases 'commentaries penetrated into the texts and became mixed with them' (*ibid.*, p. 14).

It should, however, be noted that the Mahārājas are mentioned in the inscriptions³ (really labels to the Mahārājas' images) from the Buddhist establishment at Barhut, belonging to the Śuṅga age (c. 187-75 B.C.), though they are called merely Yakṣas and not Mahārājas, probably because the Mahārāja concept was still on its way to development. Sanskrit Buddhist literature associates Kubera with Maṇibhadra, Dhṛtarāṣṭra with Sūrya, Virūḍhaka with Yama and Virūpākṣa with Varuṇa,⁴ apparently due to the influence of Brāhmaṇical mythology.⁵ The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* says that Virūḍhaka, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Virūpākṣa, representing respectively Śakra, Yama and Varuṇa, and also Kubera should be dressed like the Sun and wear armours.⁶

The earliest epigraphical reference to the Brāhmaṇical Lokapālas (protectors of the worlds) or Dikpālas (guardians of the quarters) is found in the Nanaghat inscription of queen Nāganikā of the Śātavāhana dynasty, who seems to have flourished about the close of the first century B.C.⁷ It is interesting to note that salutations are offered in this record to the four 'Lokapālas', viz. Yama, Varuṇa, Kubera and Vāsava (Indra), separately from those to Dharma (Yama) and Indra (Vāsava). It seems that the identification of Dharma and Yama and of Indra and Vāsava belongs to a later date.⁸

3 Barua and Sinha, *Barhut Inscriptions*, pp. 67 ff. Besides the *Dīghanikāya*, the authors quote the *Dīvyāvadāna*, *Mahāvastu* and *Lalitavistara* in this connection.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 67, where the authors cite the *Mahāvastu* and *Lalitavistara*.

5 Hopkins (*Epic Mythology*, p. 152, note) says that 'the four Mahārājas of the Buddhists combine the Lokapāla gods and the elephants of the directions (Vessavaṇa and Dhātaraṭṭha) with other un-Brāhmaṇic features'. But Vessavaṇa and Dhātaraṭṭha are not mentioned in the Disāgaja list which is borrowed from the Brāhmaṇical list of the Diggajas.

6 See Sircar, *Religious Life in Ancient and Medieval India*, pp. 200-01.

7 Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, Vol. I, 1965 ed., p. 193. For the number 'four', note also that the *Mahābhārata* (III. 112.1, and 161.8; XII. 827.7) compares four mighty brothers as the Lokapālas. Here as well as in IX. 61.64, the Lokapālas are indirectly represented as great heroes. I. 225.3 represents Varuṇa as the 'fourth' Lokapāla.

8 Sircar, *loc. cit.*, note 3.

The Brāhmaṇical conception of the four Dikpālas or Lokapālas is not as elaborate and definite as the Buddhist ideas about the four Mahārājas. We have seen above how the Nanaghat inscription refers to Yama, Varuṇa, Kubera and Vāsava (Indra) as the four Lokapālas, while the *Mahāvastu* and *Lalitavistara* of the early centuries of the Christian era mention the Brāhmaṇical counterparts of Kubera, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Virūdhaka and Virūpākṣa as Maṇibhadra, Sūrya (the Sun-god), Yama and Varuṇa who are respectively located in the north, east, south and west. The quarters assigned to the different Brāhmaṇical Dikpālas or Lokapālas are not specifically mentioned along with the names of the divinities in many cases. Thus the *Mahābhārata*⁹ mentions Vaivasvata (Yama), Varuṇa, Śatakratu (Indra) and Dhaneśa (Kubera) as welcoming a dead hero; but in the epics, the position of Yama and Varuṇa in the south and west is more or less fixed, even though the names of the deities are not always the same. At one place, the *Vana-parvan*¹⁰ mentions Varuṇa, Kubera, Yama (of the south) and Śakra (Indra) as Lokapālas offering some gifts to Arjuna, while elsewhere,¹¹ the group of four gods are enumerated as Indra, Agni, Varuṇa, and Yama without using the designation Lokapāla. Thus Agni takes here the place of Kubera, and Hopkins says that 'the grouping Agni, Yama, Varuṇa and Indra seems older than when Kubera is substituted for Agni'.¹² But the *Karṇa-parvan*¹³ represents Jātavedas (Agni), Yama, Varuṇa and *Bhagavat* Soma as leaders respectively of the gods in the east, the Pitṛs in the south, the gods in the west and the ruling priests in the north. Here Agni and Soma take the places of Indra and Kubera as guardians respectively of the east and north, so that Soma was another early claimant for the guard-

9 VII. 70.45. Yama, Kubera, Varuṇa and Indra or Mahendra are also mentioned in Ch. 91, verse 13, and in I. 74.85. For the epic evidence, see Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, pp. 109 ff.

10 Ch. 41, verses 6 ff.

11 Ch. 55, verse 6.

12 *Op. cit.*, p. 149.

13 VIII. 45. 31-32.

ianship of the northern quarter. Mahendra (Indra) is also clearly separated from the four Lokapālas Kubera, Yama, Soma and Varuṇa in the Udyoga-parvan.¹⁴

The reference in the *Mahābhārata*¹⁵ to the four Lokapālas living on the Himavat like the Diśāmpālas of the north seems to make a distinction between Lokapāla (world-protector) and Diśāmpāla (quarter-protector). This may be related to the reference in the Anuśāsana-parvan¹⁶ to the three *Lokas* (worlds) and the three Lokapālas. In the same way, the *Rāmāyaṇa*¹⁷ recognises Vajradhara (Indra), Yama, Varuṇa and Dhaneśa (Kubera) as the guardians of the east, south, west and north; but in one place,¹⁸ it speaks of the three Lokapālas headed by Śakra (Indra). This exhibits a confusion between the conception of the guardians of the four quarters and that of the protectors of the three worlds (the earth, the heaven and the nether world).

In the Udyoga-parvan,¹⁹ Mahendra (Indra) requests the Lokapālas Varuṇa, Yama, Soma and Kubera for helping him against Nahuṣa, makes Varuṇa the lord of waters, gives Yama and Kubera lordship (mentioned later as respectively of the Pitṛs and of the Yakṣas and wealth) like his own and offers Agni a share (meant for Indra and Agni) in the sacrifice. Hopkins notices the confused nature of the story and points out that 'here Soma comes in first, and is then displaced by Agni'.²⁰ Indra is sometimes excluded and Agni included in the list of Lokapālas,²¹ while in some cases both Śakra (Indra) and Agni are included in the list along with Varuṇa and Yama.²²

14 V. 16. 27 ff.

15 See Śānti-parvan, Ch. 327; Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

16 Ch. 158, verse 31.

17 II. 16.24. They imparted greatness, restraint, beauty and wealth. (Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 150).

18 II. 91.13.

19 Ch. 16, verses 27 ff. Indra gave the sword to the Lokapālas (XII. 166.67).

20 Hopkins, *loc. cit.*

21 *Mbh.*, III. 54.24.

22 *Ibid.*, III. 55.6.

Hopkins refers to 'the explicit corelation of three protectors with three worlds to point to an earlier group of guardians of the three', and goes on to say, "Soma still lingers in the epic as one of these ; later he rules 'above'. Yama and Varuṇa may have been the other two. What remains also, however, is the later addition of Kubera who was not a world-protector or even god at first, so that when the four were established as guardians of directions rather than of worlds, the first grouping was probably Agni, Yama, Varuṇa and Soma, the first and last then yielding to Indra and Kubera. Finally, the ejected ones (Soma and Agni ; cf. *Mbh.*, IV. 30.25) came back as guards of the intermediate points, north-east and south-east, respectively, Indra setting into the east (*Mbh.*, VII. 184.47) after Kubera had got the north."²³ It is, however, difficult to prove the antiquity of the three Lokapāla conception which was not so popular.

Chapter 37 of the *Harivaṃśa-parvan* of the *Harivaṃśa* says how Indra was the lord of the three worlds and how he made Viratha (a son of Kaśyapa), Yama, Amburāja (Varuṇa) and Pulastya's son who is the one-eyed Piṅgala (Kubera), lord (*rājā, adhipa*) respectively of the east, south, west and north. It will be seen from the above accounts that, while the position of Yama in the south and Varuṇa in the west is constant, Agni, Kubera, Indra and Viratha are assigned to the east, and Indra, Kubera and Soma to the north.

We have seen above how the Nanaghat inscription of the first century B.C. gives the number of the 'Lokapālas' specifically as four and how the said number is also often specified

23 *Op. cit.*, p. 151. Hopkins further says, "As a matter of fact, Indra belongs to the north-east, at least according to epic ideas, and epic tradition still recognises that Kubera was raised to the position of world-protector and added to the group of Yama, Indra and Varuṇa (*Rām.*, VII. 3.17 f.). In *Mbh.*, 163. 3f., Dhaumya 'takes Yudhiṣṭhira by the right hand, looks at the east', and says, 'Here is to be seen Mt. Mandara which covers the earth to the ocean. It is the district which Indra and Vaiśravaṇa (Kubera) together guard, and the seers call it the seat of Mahendra and Vaiśravaṇa ; it is where the sun rises,'....." Hopkins tries to show that Kubera and Indra are really guardians of the north and east together, meeting in the north-east.

by the epics. The same number is often indicated by the representation of the king as the fifth Lokapāla. Thus Rāvaṇa makes the said claim in the *Rāmāyaṇa* story incorporated in the *Mahābhārata*.²⁴ Likewise, the Pallava kings Skandavarman II (of copper-plate grants like the Uruvupalli, Omgoḍu No. 2 and Pikira records) and Kumāraviṣṇu I (of the Cendalūra grant) who flourished in the 6th and 5th centuries respectively, are called Pañcama-Lokapāla, 'the fifth Lokapāla'.²⁵ The idea is that, while the four Lokapālas guarded the four directions, the king was the protector of the central region of the earth. The same idea is also sometimes expressed by the epithet Madhyama-Lokapāla, 'protector of the middle region'. Kālidāsa's *Raguvamśa*²⁶ (the 4th or 5th century A.D.) applies the said epithet to a king.

The number of the Dikpālas, identified with the Lokapālas, was later raised to eight because, besides the protectors of the east, west, north and south, those of the south-east, south-west, north-east and north-west were also conceived. The *Manusmṛti*²⁷ (early centuries of the Christian era) says that the king is made out of parts taken from and is equal to the eight gods—Indra, Anila (Vāyu), Yama, Arka (Sūrya), Agni, Varuṇa, Candra (Soma) and Vitteśa (Kubera), while the *Amarakośa*²⁸ (about the sixth century A.D.) recognises Indra, Vahni (Agni), Pitṛpati (Yama), Nairṛta, Varuṇa, Marut (Vāyu), Kubera and Īśa (Īśāna) as the lords of the quarters beginning with the east, i.e. east, south-east, south, south-west, west, north-west, north and north-east. It will be seen that Arka (Sūrya) and Candra (Soma) of the *Manusmṛti* are replaced by Nairṛta (south-east) and Īśa or Īśāna (north-east) in the *Amarakośa*. Even, however,

24 III. 280.14.

25 Sircar, *The Successors of the Sātavāhanas in the Lower Deccan*, p. 196.

26 3. II. 6.

27 VII. 4-7.

28 II. ii. 6. The *Śabdakalpadrūma* (s. v. *Lokapāla*) quotes a stanza from the *Vahni Purāṇa* offering the same list with Nirṛti (for *Nairṛta*), Anila (for *Marut*), Dhanada (for *Kubera*) and Śaṅkara (*Īśa*).

after the introduction of the conception of the eight Dikpālas or Lokapālas, we have references to the older idea of the four guardians of the quarters as referred to in the *Raghuvaṃśa* and the Pallava inscriptions mentioned above and also in many other epigraphic and literary records. The Allahabad pillar inscription²⁹ of Samudragupta (c. 335-76 A.D.) regards the king as equal to Dhanada (Kubera), Varuṇa, Indra and Antaka (Yama). Daṇḍin's *Kāvyādarśa*³⁰ which may be assigned to the seventh century A.D., also has a stanza speaking of Yama, Varuṇa, Kubera and Sahāsrākṣa (Indra) as the four Lokapālas with the king as the fifth.

We have seen above that the Buddhists regarded the guardians of the quarters as the four *Mahārājas*, although the Buddhist inscriptions of about the second century B.C. call them Yakṣas and not Mahārājas. The Lokapālas are not generally called Mahārāja in the Brāhmaṇical works, even though, the *Harivaṃśa* (III. 37.22) says particularly about Viratha that Indra made him *Rājan* and *Adhipa* of the eastern quarter. Of course, if they were conceived as lords of the quarters, they could have been mentioned as *Rājan* or *Mahārāja*; but that is not usually done in Brāhmaṇical mythology. Very rarely, Kubera has been called Mahārāja in Brāhmaṇical works like the late *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* and the *Mahābhārata*³¹ probably under Buddhist influence. We have seen, however, that Kubera's position in the list of Lokapālas was not at all fixed since the *Mahābhārata*³² mentions Agni and Soma as guardians of the east and north respectively in the place of Indra and Kubera while elsewhere³³ Agni is mentioned in the place of Kubera. The *Kūrma Purāṇa*³⁴ substitutes Soma for Kubera.

Pāṇini's *sūtra*—*Mahārājāt=ṭhañ*³⁵ speaks of *bhakti* (attach-

29 Sircar, *Sel. Ins., op. cit.*, p. 267, text line 26.

30 II. 331.

31 III. 154.9.

32 VIII. 45.31-32.

33 III. 55.4, 56.9-12.

34 I. 40.34-35.

35 IV. 3.97.

ment or devotion) to Mahārāja. Another *sūtra*³⁶ is sometimes supposed to refer to Mahārāja as a *devatā* or divinity, though it is doubtful. Jayaswal took *bhakti* directed to Mahārāja in a political sense ; but the conception of divine kingship is much later than the age of Pāṇini who flourished in the fifth century B.C., its earliest mention probably being in the *Manusmṛti*³⁷ of the early centuries of the Christian era. However, *bhakti* to the *Mahārāja* may mean here attachment to the king. Bhusari, Coomaraswamy and others take Mahārāja in the sense of the Lokapālas called Mahārāja by the Buddhists.³⁸ It should be admitted, however, that the said Buddhist conception is also considerably later than Pāṇini's days and that it was not popular with the Brāhmaṇical writers.

The sixth century Buddhist lexicographer Amara does not recognise Mahārāja as a name of Kubera though he speaks of the names Kubera, Tryambakasakha, Yakṣarāt, Guhyakeśvara, Maṇuṣyadharman, Dhanada, Rājarāja, Dhanādhipa, Kinnareśa, Vaiśravaṇa, Paulastya, Naravāhana, Yakṣa, Ekapiṅga, Ailavila, Śrīda and Puṇyajaneśvara as synonymous.³⁹ Amara, however, recognises Mahārājika as a class of divinities, and Kṣīrasvāmin's commentary says, *ṣaṭtrimśad=dve śate Mahārājikāḥ*, *Mahārāja-śabdo='sty=eṣām=iti*, i.e. the Mahārājikas, 236 in number, were so called because they enjoyed the designation *Mahārāja*. Kṣīrasvāmin further says, *s=āśya devatā* (Pāṇini, IV. 2.24) *iti Māhārājika ity=eke*, *Mahārāja-Proṣṭhapadāt=ṭhañ* (Pāṇini, IV. 2.35), which indicates that, according to some, the word is *Māhārājika* meaning one who worships the *devatā* called Mahārāja. The alternative interpretation, however, seems to be unsatisfactory because in Pāṇini's *sūtra* for the formation of the two words *Māhārājika* and *Prausṭhapadika*, the latter apparently means 'related to the Proṣṭhapada-

36 IV. 2.35.

37 VII. 7-8.

38 Bhusari in *ABORI*, Vol. VIII, 1926, p. 199 ; Coomaraswamy, *Origin of the Buddha Image*, Calcutta reprint, p. 18, note 21 ; A. C. Chakravarti in *The Bhakti Cult and Ancient Indian Geography*, ed. Sircar, p. 49.

39 *Amarakośa*, I. 1.38-39.

nakṣatras', i.e. Pūrva-Bhādrapada and Uttara-Bhādrapada, which do not look specially like objects of worship. In any case, Pāṇini seems to have lived much earlier than the development of the Buddhist conception of the divinities called Mahārāja, so that the word *Mahārāja* used by Pāṇini probably means 'a king' rather than 'a deity'. It may be noted here that Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* ignores the *sūtra*—*Mahārājāṭ=ṭhañ* as unnecessary because the formation of the word *Māhārājika* has already been suggested by the earlier *sūtra*—*Mahārāja-Proṣṭhapadāṭ=ṭhañ*, the word as formed by the two *sūtras* having the same sense. Modern lexicographers have taken the word *Māhārājika* in the sense of 'fit for a great king; imperial, royal', and 'attached or devoted to the ruling prince'.

A medieval Purāṇic conception of the Dikpālas regards them as ten in number, viz. Indra in the east, Vahni in the south-east, Yama in the south, Nirṛta in the south-west, Varuṇa in the west, Marut in the north-west, Kubera in the north, Īśa in the north-east, Brahman in the zenith and Ananta in the nadir.⁴⁰ The Buddhist *Dharmasaṃgraha*, which is ascribed to Nāgārjuna but is a medieval work in its present form, gives the same list with Kṛṣṇa in place of Ananta (Viṣṇu) and says that there are fourteen Lokapālas when *candra*, *sūrya*, *prthvī* and *asura* are added to the above ten.⁴¹

40 *Śabdakalpadrūpa*, s. v. *Dikpāla*.

41 See sections 7-10. Cf. Winternitz, *HIL*, Vol. II, p. 347.

X

CIRCUMCISION IN VĀTSYĀYANA'S KĀMASŪTRA

Ramprasad Majumdar, Calcutta¹

Circumcision, i.e. the cutting of the foreskin of the male organ, is practised by the Jews, Muhammadans and other peoples as a religious or ethnic act of considerable importance. That the practice was prevalent in India is suggested by the *Kāmasūtra* of Vātsyāyana. In the said work edited by G. D. Shastri, with Yaśodhara's *Jayamaṅgalā* commentary (K. S. S., No. 29), I have come across the following passage—

*Dākṣiṇātyānām liṅgasya karṇayor=iva vyadhanam
bālasya* (VII. 2.14-15).

This shows that boys were circumcised in the Dākṣiṇātya country (i.e. South India) in early times.²

1 [We are very sorry that Sri Majumdar died shortly after our seminars.—Ed.]

2 [*Karṇa-vedha* (piercing the lobes of the ears of the male and female child is a religious rite of the Hindus. See Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. II, pp. 254-55. *Liṅga-vyadhana* thus appears to be a religious rite like *karṇa-vyadhana*. Since *karṇa-vyadhana* mentioned in the context was performed on both boys and girls, we have to think whether *bālānām* means 'of the boys and girls' specially because the word *liṅga* not only means 'the male organ of generation', but sometimes also 'the female organ of generation'. Circumcision of the Jews and some other peoples is stated to mean 'the cutting off of the prepuce of a male child and the clitoris of a female child'. 'Piercing' is a little different from 'cutting off'. The commentator, however, explains the above passage and the immediately preceding one (*na tv=aviddhasya kasyacid=vyavahṛtir=ast=iti*—VII. 1.14) as follows : *viddham=adhikṛty=āha na tv=iti| aviddhasya liṅgasy=eti sambandhaḥ| vyavahṛtiḥ samprayoyaḥ| bālasya=eti| yathā karṇayor=bāl-āvasthāyām=eva vyadhanam tathā liṅgasya| yūnām ca tatra ānyasya vā liṅgasya. Vātsyāyana—yuvā tu śastreṇa cchedayitvā yāvad=rudhirasy=āgamanam tāvad=udake tiṣṭhet* (VII. 2.16). Commentary—*vyadhana-vidim=āha yuvā tu śastreṇ=eti| bhedayitv=ety=anena kuśalena bahiṣcarm=ākṛṣy=ānyatra sthāpayitvā śīrām tyaktvā tīryak chedayet yath=obhayataś=chidram bhavati| udake tiṣṭhet=rudhira-stambhan-ārtham| Vātsyāyana—vaiśady-ārtham ca tasyām rātrau nirbandhād=vyavāyah* (VII. 2.17). Commentary—*vaiśady-ārtham=iti| chidrasy=āsankoc-ārtham nirbandhād=vyavāya iti| bahūn vārān maithunam kāryam mamatve hi tatpratīkārasya pīḍ-ābhāvāt*.—Ed.]

XI

HINDU RELIGION AS REFLECTED IN GUPTA COINS

S. K. Maity, Jadavpur University

The Gupta emperors were highly religious and, under their patronage, Hinduism got a new lease of life. Thus, from the epigraphic records, we know that land and money were liberally endowed by the emperors, queens, ministers, royal officials, guilds and wealthy citizens to the temples and Brāhmaṇas and to Buddhist and Jain monasteries for their own religious merit and for that of their predecessors and successors.¹ Their coins also exhibit many instances of religious thinking and practices.

Our ancient thinkers recommended four stages (*āśramas*) of life, viz. *brahmacarya*, *gārhasthya*, *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa*.² According to this system, one should lead an austere life as a married householder, as a hermit and as a homeless religious beggar with all his earthly ties broken. The ultimate goal of life is, however, to attain liberation (*mokṣa*). This system has a reflection on the coins of the Gupta period.

In the boyhood and early youth, the royal princes received proper training and education from their father and grandfather. We have, thus, an able set of rulers and conquerors among the early Gupta emperors.³ They also attached importance to their family life as a householder whose dutifulness is the source of *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*. A very happy married life is reflected on a good number of the Gupta coins. V. A. Smith, J. Allan, A. S. Altekar and others attach political

1. See Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, Vol. I, 1st ed., pp. 262, 280; Fleet, *CII*, Vol. III, pp. 25, 31; *Ind. Ant.*, 1910, pp. 193-216; *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XV, p. 113; Vol. XX, p. 59; Vol. XXI, p. 78. [The activities of citizens and guilds need not have been inspired by the emperors.—Ed.]

2. A. L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, 1st ed., pp. 158-59.

3. S. K. Maity, 'Studies in the Gupta Administration', *JAS*, Vol. I, No. 3, 1959. [It is difficult to believe that the emperors had time and leisure to impart education personally to their sons and grandsons.—Ed.]

significance to the Candragupta-Kumāradevī (i.e. King-and-Queen) type of gold coins.⁴ It has also great social and religious value in the life of Candragupta I. On the obverse of the coin, Candragupta I offers apparently a marriage ring to his favourite queen *Mahādevī Kumārdevī*. On one specimen, A. S. Altekar has identified the object as a *sindūrdāni*.⁵

The King-Queen-on-Couch type of gold coins can be regarded as depicting the family life of Candragupta II. On their obverse, the Garuḍa standard is visible, and on the reverse, the king dressed in *dhoti* (not in his usual royal dress) and the queen with *sāri* and bodice are sitting face to face on couches.⁶ Both of them have jewellery on their persons and are looking graceful and noble. Candragupta II offers a *sindūrdāni* to his beloved queen in a homely atmosphere.⁷

His son and successor, Kumāragupta I, is an ideal lover and husband. His love for his *Mahādevī Anantadevī* reminds us of the relationship between Shāh Jahān and his beloved Mumtāz in the Mughul period. On the obverse of his King-and-Queen type of gold coins, Kumāragupta I offers a bunch of flowers to the queen. Both of them look very cheerful.⁸

Like his grandfather Samudragupta, Kumārgupta I has special fascination for music ; and he likes to make his queen happy by playing instrumental music apparently in his private apartment. By a careful study of his Lyrist type of gold coins, it appears that, sitting on a couch and wearing coat, *dhoti* and jewellery, he plays on his lyre.⁹ Anantadevī, apparently

4 J. Allan, *Coins of the Gupta Dynasties and of Śaśāṅka*, p. lxxiii ; A. S. Altekar, *Coinage of the Gupta Empire*, p. 26 ; V. A. Smith, *Indian Museum Catalogue*, Vol. I, p. 100. [It is difficult to say how happy the conjugal life of an emperor and of his many queens was in this and other cases.—Ed.]

5 Altekar, *loc. cit.*

6 *Ibid.*, p. 138.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 140.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 212.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 211.

seated on a couch in a palace hall, listens to the music of her husband and smilingly smells a flower.

The Gupta monarchs also recognised the importance of their queens in religious ceremonies. Only the chief queen (*Mahādevī*)¹⁰ had the right to play the part of the worshipper along with her husband in the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice. The *Aśvamedha* type of gold coins of Samudragupta and Kumāragupta I testify to the above facts.¹¹

Unlike his grandfather, Skandagupta issued only four types of gold coins, viz., Archer, Chatra, Horseman, and King-and-Lakṣmī.¹² His success in wars with the Hūṇas and the Puṣyamitras is reflected in the coins. He may have issued a special type of gold coins in order to commemorate his success and, as A. S. Altekar thinks, this is probably the King-and-Lakṣmī type.¹³ On the obverse and reverse type of the above coins, the female figures on both the sides are regarded by Altekar as Lakṣmī. The identification of Lakṣmī on the reverse of the coin is acceptable. As usual, the goddess, nimbate, is seated on a lotus and holds a noose in her right hand and lotus in the left. But on the obverse design, the female figure is not nimbate and holds no noose or cornucopia. She is standing before Skandagupta with a lotus in one hand, the other hand holding some other object as a sort of blessing for the king in the perilous war against the Hūṇas and the Puṣyamitras. It is unusual that, on both the sides, the female figures would be the same (i.e. Lakṣmī). Thus it is better to identify the figure on the obverse with the queen-mother; and the type should better be called Queen-mother-and-King instead of 'King-and-Lakṣmī'. The sacred Garuḍa standard at the centre, the bow and arrow in the king's hand and his military attire suggest his march to the battle-field.

10 [*Mahādevī* was the designation of the queens and not only of the chief queen. The chief queen of Candragupta II was Dhruvadevī; but his other queen Kuberaṇāgā is also called *Mahādevī* in the Poona plates of Prabhāvatī.—Ed.]

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 211; Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. lxxvi, lxxxix.

12 Altekar, *op. cit.*, pp. 242-49.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 244.

The third stage of ideal life is *vānaprastha*. After fulfilling all his duties and responsibilities in private and public life, Kumāragupta I perhaps preferred to renounce the world and this is probably indicated by his 'Apratigha' type of gold coins.¹⁴ On the obverse of the coin, a male figure with folded hands is standing at the centre, wearing a *dhoti*; he is thinking seriously and his hair is knotted like that of a *yogin*. To the right, stands a female figure with knotted hair and in ordinary dress with her left hand on her waist; her right hand is raised in the pose of argument. Her fingers almost touch the central figure. Another male figure is standing to the right with a shield in one hand and Garuḍa standard in the other. None of the figures is nimbate. But, as usual, the goddess of fortune (Lakṣmī) is nimbate with a lotus in hand.

The central figure is no doubt Kumāragupta I and the lady on the right his queen and the male figure on the left the crown-prince (or general). He is contemplating to renounce the world abdicating the throne in favour of the crown-prince. His queen and crown-prince (or general) are trying their best to dissuade him to take such a decision; but they are without success. Kumāragupta I has expressed his decision with folded hands. He is rather firm in his resolution and is, therefore, described on the reverse as *apratigha* (invincible); no one can change or influence his decision.¹⁵

Regarding Harṣavardhana, Hiuen-tsang says, "The king's day was divided into three periods, of which one was given to affairs of government, and two were devoted to religious works. He was indefatigable and the day was too short for

14 Altekar, *op. cit.*, p. 207. [It is difficult to prove that any of the Gupta emperors or later kings of Indian history adopted the *vānaprastha* or *sannyāsa* stages of life. A few of them are of course known to have abdicated in favour of their successor probably due to infirmity or disease. For the Apratigha type, see Sircar, *Studies in Indian Coins*, pp. 217-21. —Ed.]

15 *Loc. cit.* [Firmness of resolution and invincibility are different things. The central figure is much smaller in size than the figures on the two sides.—Ed.]

him.”¹⁶ But we have no such detailed record of the daily life of the Gupta rulers, though, from the study of their coins, it can be suggested that they liked performing religious rites. Samudragupta, Candragupta II, Kumāragupta I and Skandagupta offered oblations (or incense) in altars, perhaps regularly. It is found on the obverse of the Standard, Archer and Battle-axe types of gold coins of Samudragupta; the Kāca type of gold coins; the Chatra, King-and-Queen and Standard types of gold coins of Candragupta II; the Swordsman and Chatra types of gold coins of Kumāragupta I and the Chatra type of gold coins of Skandagupta.¹⁷ According to Altekar, in some cases the conventional altar looks like a flower pot with the sacred *tulasī* plant.¹⁸ The *tulasī* is associated with the cult of Viṣṇu and the Gupta rulers were Vaiṣṇavas.¹⁹

After discharging the duties of a householder and performing penance and austerities in *Vānaprastha*, one attains heaven. We notice a few instances of this in the Gupta coins. The obverse legend of the Standard type of gold coins of Samudragupta runs *samara-śata-vitata-vijayo jita-ripur = ajito divaṃ jayati*, “The invincible [king] who has won victories on a hundred battle-fields and conquered enemies, wins the heaven.”²⁰ Again on the Kāca type coins, we have *Kāco gām = avajitya divaṃ karma-bhīr = uttamair = jayati*, “Having conquered the earth, Kāca wins the heaven by excellent deeds.”²¹ And on the obverse of the Lion-slayer type of gold coins of Candragupta II—*Narendra-siṃha-Candraguptaḥ pṛthivīm jitvā divaṃ jayati*, “Candragupta, a lion among kings, having conquered the earth, wins the heaven.”²² We have many such statements on the Archer and Aśvamedha types of gold coins of Samudragupta, the Chatra and Standard types of gold coins of Candragupta II, the Archer,

16 Watters. *Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*.

17 Altekar, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-56, 78, 127, 138, 141, 183, 206, 247.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 43, 50.

19 *Loc. cit.* (R. D. Banerji, *Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 102).

20 *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48. [The coins were issued during the kings' life time. Ed.]

21 *Ibid.*, p. 87.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 109. [The reading of the legend is apparently wrong.—Ed.]

Horseman, Swordsman, Lion-slayer and Aśvamedha types of gold coins, and silver (Trident type) and silver-plated copper coins of Kumāragupta I, the Archer type of gold and silver coins (Madhyadeśa type) of Skandagupta and the silver coins of Budhagupta.²³

The worship of gods and goddesses and certain religious practices can be studied from coins. The representation of goddesses is more prominent on Gupta coins than gods. Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī were the favourite god and goddess of the Gupta emperors.

Lakṣmī,²⁴ the goddess of fortune, is seen on throne or lotus holding in her left hand a cornucopia or horn of plenty suggesting that the Gupta empire 'overflowed with flowers, fruits and corn'. Sometimes she holds in her left hand a lotus flower as a blessing for her devotee. But her right hand usually holds a noose. Sometimes she is seen scattering coins and feeding a peacock from a bunch of fruits. Like the queens, she appears in *sāri*, bodice and different kinds of jewellery. Her look is mother-like. We see her graceful figure on the reverse of the Standard, Archer, Battle-axe and Lyrist types of gold coins of Samudragupta, the Kāca type of gold coins, the Archer, Horseman, Chatra, Standard and Cakravikrama types of gold coins of Candragupta II, the Archer, Horseman, Swordsman, Elephant-rider, Elephant-rider-Lion-slayer, Chatra and Apratigha types of gold coins of Kumāragupta I, the Archer, King-Lakṣmī (or Queen-mother), Chatra and Horseman types of gold coins of Skandagupta and the gold coins of Narasimhagupta and Viṣṇugupta.²⁵ The goddess of fortune, thus, smiles favourably at the success of the Gupta rulers.

Next to Lakṣmī, Viṣṇu finds prominence on the Gupta coins. The Cakravikrama type of gold coins of Candragupta II has on the obverse Lord Viṣṇu offering *prasāda* (sweets) to

23 *Ibid.*, pp. 53, 61, 127, 141, 167, 174, 183, 185, 200, 226, 233, 242-43, 257, 278.

24 Altekar, *op. cit.*, pp. 48, 55, 58, 88, 93-95, 123-26, 129-33, 141, 169-74, 177-96, 207-10, 184-90, 194-96, 207-10, 243-50, 264, 270-77, etc.

25 *Loc. cit.*

Candragupta II.²⁶ The figure of Garuḍa can be seen on the silver coins of Candragupta II, Kumāragupta I and Skandagupta, and on the copper coins of Candragupta II and Kumāragupta I.²⁷ The Garuḍa standard is seen on the coins of Candragupta I, Samudragupta, Kāca, Candragupta II, Kumāragupta I, Skandagupta, Narasimhagupta and Viṣṇugupta.²⁸ Many of the Gupta rulers assumed the title *Paramabhāgavata* indicating devotion to Viṣṇu.²⁹ Garuḍa, the *vāhana* of Viṣṇu, was also honoured by them.

The goddess Durgā (or Ambikā) was popular. Durgā seated on a lion is seen on the Candragupta-Kumāradevi type of Candragupta I, the Lion-slayer type of Candragupta II, and the Lion-slayer and King-and-Queen type of gold coins of Kumāragupta I.³⁰ Her lord Śiva was also worshipped by the Gupta rulers and is represented by his *triśūla* (trident) on the reverse of the silver coins of Kumāragupta I³¹ and Nandin (Bull)³² appears on the reverse of the silver issues of his son Skandagupta.*

The goddess Makaravāhini Gaṅgā was equally popular. Her slender and graceful figure is seen on the reverse of the Tiger-slayer type of gold coins of Samudragupta, and the Tiger-slayer and Rhinoceros-slayer types of gold coins of Kumāragupta I.³³

Another god was Kumāra, i. e. Kārttikeya. It is the name of some of the Gupta rulers. The god Kārttikeya was the favourite god of Kumāragupta I, as Lord Viṣṇu was the favourite of Candragupta II. On the reverse of the Peacock

26 Altekar, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

27 *Ibid.*, pp. 150-54, 156-61, 219-26, 232-37, 251-52.

28 Altekar, *op. cit.*, *passim.*

29 *Loc. cit.*

30 Altekar, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 105, 185, 212.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 226.

32 *Ibid.*, p. 252.

*[It is difficult to prove that the Vaiṣṇavite Gupta emperors worshipped Śiva and Durgā side by side with Viṣṇu.—Ed.]

33 *Ibid.*, pp. 69, 190, 197.

type of coins, Kārttikeya is seen riding on his peacock.³⁴ On the obverse of some coins, the ruler is feeding peacock from a bunch of fruits. But on the Horseman, Tiger-slayer, Elephant-rider and Lion-slayer types of gold coins of Kumāragupta I, Lakṣmī is feeding the peacock, and not the king.³⁵ On some of the silver coins of Kumāragupta I, Kārttikeya is also represented.³⁶ The fan-tail peacock is seen on the silver coins of Skandagupta and Budhagupta.³⁷

After completing his conquests, Samudragupta performed the horse sacrifice which was in abeyance since the days of Puṣyamitra Śuṅga. He issued the Aśvamedha type of gold coins on that occasion.³⁸ Similarly, after consolidating his position in Northern India, his grandson Kumāragupta I also performed a horse sacrifice.³⁹

On the obverse of the Aśvamedha type of gold coins of Samudragupta and Kumāragupta I, a horse is standing before a decorated *yūpa* (sacrificial post).⁴⁰ On the reverse side of the coins, the chief queen (*Mahādevī*) is holding a chowrie over her right shoulder and a piece of cloth (or towel) in her left hand. There is a spear-like object in her front. According to the *Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra*, the *Mahādevī* is required to fan and wash the horse and then clean the animal with the help of a towel. The spear-like object is actually a needle (*sūci*). It is stated in the same work that there should be three needles of gold, silver and copper. After the horse is sacrificed, the three queens of the king extensively puncture its body by needles in order to facilitate the passage of the king's sword into its body. The *Mahādevī* (chief queen) is to use the gold needle, the favourite the one of silver and the discarded the copper one.⁴¹

34 *Ibid.*, p. 203.

35 *Ibid.*, pp. 185, 194. [Sic.—Ed.]

36 *Ibid.*, pp. 216-34.

37 *Ibid.*, pp. 250, 275.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 61.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 200.

40 *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 200.

41 XX. 7 ; *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, VI. 6.4.

The marriage of Candragupta I and Kumāradevī is also represented by the Candragupta-Kumāradevī (or King-Queen) type of gold coins.⁴² On the obverse, Candragupta I is offering a ring or *sindūrdāni* to his queen symbolising their marriage. The Gupta emperors might have celebrated their marriage anniversaries by minting coins. On one such occasion, Candragupta II offers an object, apparently a *sindūrdāni*, as suggested by Altekar, to his favourite queen.⁴³ Both of them are in informal dresses sitting face to face on a couch. In a similiar manner, Kumāragupta I offers Anantadevī a bunch of flowers.⁴⁴

The epigraphic records mention the activities of diverse creeds which illustrate clearly the catholicity of mind and the tolerant policy of the Gupta emperors. Samudragupta is known to have granted permission to king Meghavarṇa of Ceylon to build a monastery at Bodhgaya.⁴⁵ It is also recorded in the Sanchi inscription of Candragupta II⁴⁶ that his official Āmrakārdava endowed 25 *dīnāras* for the maintenance of five Bhikṣus and for lighting a lamp in the Ratnagṛha. According to the Chinese pilgrim, Fa-hien, Buddhism was in a quite flourishing state in Northern India. Similarly, Jainism also received equal patronisation.⁴⁷ The Mathurā inscription of 432 A.D. records the erection of a Jain image.⁴⁸ There are many such examples in the epigraphic records. On the whole, different religious sects lived side by side with peace and amity and that speaks of broadness of the people's mind in that age.

42 Altekar, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 138.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 212.

45 Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

46 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

47 James Legge, *Fa-hien's Records of Buddhistic Kingdoms*.

48 [*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. II, p. 210.—Ed.]

XII

GAJALAKṢMĪ ON EARLY INDIAN COINS

Samaresh Bandyopadhyay, Calcutta University

In a paper 'Lakṣmī on Early Indian Coins', published in *Foreigners in Ancient India and Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī in Art and Literature*, ed. D. C. Sircar, Calcutta, 1970, Dr. Sm. B. Lahiri has at first referred to the Gajalakṣmī variety of Lakṣmī and noted the coins on which she is represented. The coins considered by Dr. Sm. Lahiri were, mostly referred to in *The Development of Hindu Iconography* by J. N. Banerjea who remarked that 'the motif, as it typifies the Indian idea of prosperity, frequently appears on coins and sculptures of later date and is still used by the Hindus'.¹ Banerjea, however did not refer to any coin bearing Gajalakṣmī which can be assigned to a date later than the first century A.D. and this probably led Dr. Sm. Lahiri to observe that the Gajalakṣmī device 'occurs on coins datable between the third century B.C. and the first century A.D.' and 'ceases to occur on coins after the first century A.D.'² While drawing attention to the depiction of Gajalakṣmī on some Śātavāhana lead coins from Paithan,³ not noticed by Dr. Sm. Lahiri, we would, however, like to point out that Dr. Sm. Lahiri's contention requires a slight modification in view of the evidence at our disposal. The motif has really been seen represented on some coins of much later date. Attention may first be drawn to certain gold coins of Śaśāṅka, king of Gauḍa ruling in the first quarter of the seventh century A.D. and a rival and oponent of the Maukharis of Kanauj and Harṣvardhana of Sthāṇvisvara. Issued in the *suvarṇa* standard of 80 Ratis, the coins, which are

1 *Op. cit.*, pp. 110-11.

2 *Op. cit.*, pp. 126-27.

3 *IAR*, 1965-66 (cyclostyled copy). Dr. S. B. Deo reported at the 59th Annual Numismatic Conference held at Nagpur that some Śātavāhana coins from Ter also bear the figure of the deity.

debased and unsatisfactorily executed,⁴ may be described as follows.

Obverse : Śiva, nimbate, reclining to left on couchant bull to left, with right hand resting on bull's hump and left hand uplifted holding an uncertain object ; to the left of the head of the deity, there is an orb of the moon (indicating Śaśāṅka, 'moon') ; legend below in exergue *jayaḥ* (victory); in right margin—Śrī-Śa[śāṅka] (vertically written).

Reverse : Lakṣmī, nimbate, seated cross-legged on lotus, facing front ; holds a lotus with stalk in her left hand which rests on her knee, while her right hand is outstretched but empty ; above on either side of the deity, stands an elephant sprinkling water over her (*abhiṣeka* of Lakṣmī) ; legend on the right—Śrī-Śaśāṅkaḥ. No symbol or border of dots is seen.

Besides the coins of Śaśāṅka, certain highly debased gold coins⁵ of one Jaya, whose identification is uncertain, bear on them the figure of Lakṣmī being anointed by an elephant on the left side. The elephant on the right side is not visible probably for the reason that it is occupied by the long legend. Jaya has been placed between c. 550 and 650 A.D. on palaeographical grounds. The coins may be described as follows.

Obverse : King, nimbate, standing to left, holding bow in left hand and arrow in right ; *Cakra* standard behind the king's right hand ; legend—*Jaya* under the left arm of the king; no trace of any circular legend.

4 Smith, *IMC*, Pl. XVI. 12 ; Allan, *BMCCGD*, Pl. XXIII. 14-16 ; Altekar, *The Coinage of the Gupta Empire*, pp. 328-30 and Pl. XIXA. 8-9 ; B. N. Srivastava, 'Śaśāṅka, King of Gauḍa', *Bulletin of the U. P. Historical Society*, No. 3, p. 57 and Plate.

5 Allan, *op. cit.*, Pl. XXIV. 6-8 ; Altekar, *op. cit.*, pp. 330-32 and Pl. XIXA. 11-13.

Reverse : Lakṣmī, nimbate, seated on lotus facing front, holding fillet in outstretched right hand and lotus in left ; above, elephant on the left sprinkling water over the deity ; legend on right—*Śra(Śrī)-Prakāṇḍayaśā*.

The coins of Śaśāṅka and Jaya are thus important for they definitely prove that the representation of Gajalakṣmī on coins was not discontinued after the first century A.D. They are also important for they add to the number of cases of the seated Gajalakṣmī on coins. As noted by J. N. Banerjea,⁶ the figure of Gajalakṣmī is frequently found on tribal coins,⁷ but is seldom represented as seated.⁸

6 *Op. cit.*, p. 110 and note 2.

7 Allan, *BMCCAI*, pp. 131-34, 149, 187, 190-91, 256 and illustrations.

8 On some square copper coins of Ujjayinī (*ibid.*, Pl. XVIII, 24) and of Śivadatta of Ayodhyā (*ibid.*, Pl. XLIII, 4-5), Gajalakṣmī is seen seated. For interesting details of Gajalakṣmī, cf. J. N. Banerjea, *op. cit.*, pp. 106, 110, 133, 150, 188, 194, 196-197, 265, 375-76 ; also K. K. Thaplyal, 'Gajalakṣmī on Seals' in *Foreigners in Ancient India and Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī in Art and Literature*, ed. D. C. Sircar, pp. 112-25.

XIII

MĀRTANḌA-BHAIRAVA*

Sm. Juthika Maitra, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC,
Calcutta University

In spite of the attitude of deep devotion and attachment to particular deities by followers of different sects, some sort of syncretism not only in idea, but also in practical forms of worship developed in course of time ; e.g. Hari-Hara, Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa, etc. The causes leading to the growth of such mixed icons have been discussed by J. N. Banerjea and other scholars. The present paper deals with the concept of a mixed form of Śiva-Sūrya.

The association of Viṣṇu (originally an Āditya) and Sūrya is frequently met with, but that of Sūrya and Śiva is rare. The *Matsya Purāṇa* contains at least two references indicating such an association. In Ch. 55 (*Ādityaśayanavrata*), reference has been made to the worship of Umā-Maheśvara under the name of the Sun.¹ Again, it is said that there is no difference between Umāpati and Ravi.² Then, after having enumerated the Sun's names and epithets by which Śiva is denoted, the text adds : "Homage to that one, who carries noose, goad, skull-cup, serpent, moon and bow."³ It may be observed that seven of the above-mentioned attributes are Śaivite, only one (the lotus, *padma*) is the characteristic emblem of the Sun. This further shows that the god has eight hands. Ch. 93 (*Navagraha-homaśāntividhāna*) explains a rite in honour of the nine *grahas*, each of them being associated with one titular divinity (*adhi-devatā*), e.g., Īśvara is that of the Sun, Umā of the Moon and

*[The revised copy of the paper was received on 8.11.71.—Ed.]

1 LV. 5—*Umā-Maheśvarasy=ārcām=arcayet Sūrya-nāmabhiḥ.*

2 LV. 6—*Umāpate Raver=v=āpi na bhedo dṛśyate kvacit.*

3 LV. 16—*namo='stu pāś-āṅkuṣa-śūla-padma-kapāla-sarp-endu-dhanur-dharāya.*

the like.⁴ The *Matsya Purāṇa* therefore presents Śiva as closely connected with the Sun.

The *Skanda Purāṇa* as well as the *Sauradharmā* (cited by Hemādri) refers to the Sun as Hiraṇyaretas or Suvarṇaretas who is equal to Śiva. In the *Sāmba Purāṇa*, Chs. 16-17, the story of Diṇḍi is narrated as follows. After tearing away Brahman's head, Rudra took the skull in his hand and went naked to Dāruvana for practising penance. At the sight of Rudra, the minds of the wives and daughters of the sages became agitated. So the sages drove Rudra away from the place. Rudra then went to the solar region where the Sun's chief attendants advised him to appeal to the Sun for getting rid of the sin committed. Rudra eulogised the Sun, the result being that he became purified and was given the name Diṇḍi. The Sun advised Rudra to live in a sacred place on the earth where he himself would live with him in company with his eighteen chief attendants as well as fourteen others. The Sun also conferred divine knowledge on Rudra, gave the name of Avimukta-kṣetra to the place where Rudra practised austerities for attaining his favour, and assured Rudra that those people, who would bow down to the latter and the Sun at that place, would become sinless. The story perhaps shows the way how the cult of Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava developed. In the *Līṅga Purāṇa*,⁵ we find reference to such a syncretic form of Sūrya and Śiva. The two sectarian Purāṇas, viz. *Sāmba* and *Līṅga*, classed as Saura and Śaiva respectively, refer to the cult of Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava. This type of image is described in the *Śāradātilaka Tantra* as follows : "We render homage to the god who possesses an innate lustre as the bud of a golden lotus and has in his hands *khaṭvāṅga*, *padma*, *cakra*, *śakti*, *pāśa*, *śṛṅgi*, *akṣamālā* and *kapāla*. Obeisance to him who has four faces and is beautified by three

4 XCIII. 13—*Bhāskarasya* = *Eśvaraṁ vidyād* = *Umām ca Śaśinas* = *tathā* ; cf. *Līṅga*, Uttara-khaṇḍa, XIX. 24—*Sūryaḥ Śivo Jagannāthaḥ Somah sākṣād* = *Umā svayam*.

5 Loc. cit.

eyes each, and wears a tiara of precious pearls and is ornamented with a necklace.”⁶

In the *Agni Purāṇa*, CCCI. 12-14, Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava's attributes are identical with those given in the *Nārāyaṇīya*,⁷ cited by Rāghava-bhaṭṭa on the Tantra. The passage *sindūr-āruṇam=īśānaṁ vām-ārdha-dayitaṁ Ravim* is explained by Rāghava-bhaṭṭa as follows: *īśāna* is of red vermilion colour

6 *Śāradātilaka*, XIV. 71—

*hemāmbhoja-pravāla-pratima-nijaruciṁ cāru khaṭvāṅga-padmau
cakram śaktiṁ=ca pāśaṁ śṛṅgiṁ=atiruciram=akṣamālā-kapālam/
hast-āmbhojair=dadhānaṁ trinayana-vilasad-veda-vaktr-ābhirāmaṁ
Mārtaṇḍam vallbh-ārdhaṁ maṇimaya-mukutaṁ hāra dīptaṁ bhajāmaḥ||*

[The translation suggested above is inaccurate. The language quite clearly speaks of Mārtaṇḍa (i.e. Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava) as *vallabh-ārdha*, i.e. 'having his wife as his left half.' One part of the image looked like *hem-āmbhoja*, i.e. gold coloured, and the other like *pravāla* or coral [of the red variety]. As will be seen below, the complexion of Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava is sometimes said to be golden; but the epithet *sindūr-āruṇa*, to be discussed below, possibly suggests that the complexion of the god is red while that of the goddess, forming the left half of the body, may be golden.—Ed.]

7 *Nārāyaṇīya Tantra*—

*sindūr-āruṇam=īśānaṁ vām-ārdha-dayitaṁ Ravim/
pāś-āṅkuśa-dharaṁ devaṁ s-ākṣamālā-kapālinam||
khaṭvāṅg-ādi-śaktiṁ=ca dadhānaṁ catur-ānanam/
aṣṭa-bāhuṁ dviṣaṭk-ākṣam.....||*

Agni Purāṇa, CCC. (ed. R. L. Mitra)—

*sindūr-āruṇam=īśāne vām-ārdha-dayitaṁ Ravim/
pāś-āṅkuśa-dharaṁ devaṁ akṣamālā-kapālinam||
khaṭvāṅg-ābj-ādi-śaktiṁ=ca dadhānaṁ catur-ānanam/
antar-bāhy-ādi-khaṭvāṅga-padmaṣṭham ravi-maṇḍale||
Ibid., CCCI (Ānandāśrama ed.)—*

*Sendravāruṇam=īśānaṁ vām-ārdha-dayitaṁ Ravim/
pāś-āṅkuśa-dharaṁ devaṁ hy=akṣamālā-kapālinam||
khaṭvāṅg-ābj-ādi-śaktiṁ=ca dadhānaṁ catur-ānanam/
antar-bāhye dviṣaṭk-ākṣam padmaṣṭham ravi-maṇḍale||
Ibid., CCCI (Vaṅgavāsī ed.)—*

*Sindūr-āruṇam=īśāne vām-ārdha-dayitaṁ Ravim/
āgney-ādiṣu koṇeṣu kuja-mand-āhi-ketavaḥ||*

Vide CCC—

*pāś-āṅkuśa-dharaṁ devaṁ=akṣamālā-kapālinam||
khaṭvāṅg-ābj-ādi-śaktiṁ=ca dadhānaṁ catur-ānanam/
antar-bāhy-ādi-khaṭvāṅga-padmaṣṭham ravi-maṇḍale||*

having Ravi on the left as his loving better half.* Though the interpretation is clear and acceptable, the aforesaid verse is grammatically incorrect and is no doubt suggestive of the vermilion colour of *Īśāna* having his beloved goddess on the left. The form of the Sun-god with his better half in the left part of his body, as suggested by D. C. Sircar in *Foreigners in Ancient India and Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī in Art and Literature*, pp. 140-41, is neither referred to in any of the *Purāṇas* nor has any sculptured image of this type been yet discovered. On the other hand, *Śiva* is described in many texts as having his beloved goddess on the left. In its description of the syncretic form of *Sūrya* and *Śiva*, the *Līṅgā Purāṇa*, as we have seen above, mentions the latter as *Ardhanārīśvara*.⁸

Some Asiatic Society Mss. of the *Agni Purāṇa* gives the verse as *sindūr-āruṇam=īśānaṁ vām-ārdha-dayitaṁ param*. M. N. Dutta translated the verse on the basis of a version of the text where the *śloka* about *Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava* is bisected and distributed in two chapters. A portion of Ch. CCCI was arbitrarily incorporated in Ch. CCC. In course of a discussion on *grahahṛnmantra* in this Chapter, a syncretic form of *Sūrya* and *Śiva* is described abruptly and irrelevantly.

The *Āgamic* texts enumerate as many as sixtyfour *Bhairavas*

*[This is wrong because *Śiva* is not red-complexioned. *Īśāna*, in the sense of *Śiva*, cannot be the correct reading even if we concede the unhappy *anvaya*—*sindūr-āruṇam Ravim, vām-ārdha-dayitaṁ=Īśānam*, because *Īśānam* and *Ravim*, mentioned separately, do not mean a composite single god, so that epithets like *pāśāṅkuṣa-dharam*, etc., in the singular, become unsuitable. The reference is to *Ravi* (*Mārtaṇḍa*, i.e., *Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava*) who is called *vām-ārdha-dayita*, the same thing as *vallabh-ārdha* explained above. That some people regarded *īśāne* as the correct reading is indicated by the reference to *āgney-ādiṣu koṇeṣu* in one of the versions. *Īśāna*, however, may be an epithet of *Ravi* in the sense of 'lord'. Moreover, the lexicons explain the word also as 'the Sun as a form *Śiva*'. See *Śabdakalpadruma*, s.v. This meaning is quite suitable in the present case. It seems that those, to whom this meaning of the word was not apparent, thought of *īśāne* as the correct reading.—Ed.]

8 XIX, 8—

*aṣṭa-bāhuṁ catur-vaktraṁ dvādaś-ākṣaṁ mahābhujam/
ardhanārīśvaraṁ devaṁ jaṭāmukuṣa-dhārīṇam//*

divided in groups of eight, each group being headed respectively by the names—Asitāṅga, Ruru, Caṇḍa, Krodha, Unmatta-Bhairava, Kapāla, Bhīṣaṇa and Saṁhāra. Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava belongs to the Asitāṅga group. The Bhairavas of this group are of golden complexion and have good-looking limbs and carry the *triśūla*, *ḍamaru*, *pāśa* and *khaḍga*.⁹

Sri D. K. Biswas in his article entitled 'Sūrya and Śiva' in *IHQ*, Vol. XXIV, traced the origin of a Javanese *kūṭamantra* 'Om hr̥m hr̥m saḥ Śivasūryaparantejasvarūpāya namaḥ' in India. In this connection he referred to the *Saura Purāṇa*, the main purpose of which, according to Winternitz, is to glorify Śiva. In many places, however, Śiva is identified with the Sun-god, who reveals the Purāṇa. The Sun-god sometimes recommends Śiva worship. Sri Biswas further referred to the Nirmand (Kangra Dist., Punjab) plate of the *Mahāsāmanta Mahārāja* Samudrasena, wherein a Śiva-liṅga is called Mihireśvara, 'Mihira' being a well-known name of Sūrya. According to Fleet, it is a clear case of the association and identification of the Sun with Śiva.¹⁰ According to D. C. Sircar, however, Fleet's suggestion is wrong, for Śiva was so named here apparently because the god was installed by a lady named Mihiralakṣmī.¹¹

The present writer is indebted to Dr. Tarapada Bhattacharya for allowing her to consult the text of the *Śrīhayaśīrṣapañcarātra*, in which references are made to Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava in his three forms, six-handed, twelve-handed and eighteen-handed. In his six-handed form, the god is represented as standing on the lotus sprung from the ocean, or in a dancing attitude on a boat. He wields various weapons and has a fierce face with the whole range of teeth exposed. His matted hair is tied up with a snake. He should wear a garland of human heads (*muṇḍa-mālā*). In his right hands, he wields *cakra*, *triśūla* and *parigha*, and in the left *ḍamaru*, *gadā* and *khaṭvāṅga*. He has

9 Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, Pt. I, p. 180.

10 Vol. III, p. 288.

11 *Select Inscriptions*, 2nd ed., p. 290, note 3. [Śiva installed by Mihirakula was likewise called Mihireśvara (*Rāj. tar.* I. 306).—Ed.]

broad chest and well-formed hands. He should be represented as surrounded and served by his attendants Daṇḍin and Piṅgala, and his queens, Kinnaras and other gods.¹²

When the god is represented as having twelve hands, he wields *khadga*, *kheṭaka*, *cāpa*, *śūla*, *mukura*, *ghaṇṭā*, *madhupātra*, *kartṛkā*, *cakra*, *parigha*, *triśūla* and *ḍamaru*.¹³ In his eighteen-handed form, he wields *khadga*, *dhanus*, *muṣala*, *pāśa*, *mukura*, *churikā*, *paṭṭiśa*, *kheṭaka*, *śūla*, *ghaṇṭā*, *madhupātra*, *kartṛkā*, *cakra*, *parigha*, *triśūla*, *ḍamaru*, *gadā* and *khaṭvāṅga*.¹⁴

It is very interesting to note that, though the attendants of Sūrya, namely Daṇḍin and Piṅgala, are mentioned, the characteristic emblem of Sūrya, the lotus, is absent here.

As early as 1918, Rai Bahadur Hiralal discovered a six-armed composite image from Madhia in the old Panna State in Bundelkhand, though he could not identify it. It appears that the image has some bearing on the aforesaid conception of Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava as it holds in two of its left hands *triśūla* and *padma*, the third hand being in the *varada* pose. One of the right hands is broken, the others holding the *padma* and *mṛgāṅka* (deer) symbols. The boots on the legs and the lotuses in the hands are unmistakable solar features, while the trident and deer symbols are Śaivaite attributes.¹⁵ But a more prominent image of Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava belonging to the 12th century A.D. was found at the village of Manda in the Rajshahi District.¹⁶ It is now preserved in the Varendra Research Society. The sculpture has been studied by K. C. Sarkar.¹⁷ It is in high relief on a stone slab measuring 3' × 1' 6½". The two forearms, which held lotus stalks, and the two below them are broken. The face of the main figure and the crown are mutilated. The image is three-faced and has ten hands.

12 *Hayaśirṣa*, Saura-kāṇḍa, XXVII. 18-25.

13 *Ibid.*, 25-26.

14 *Ibid.*, 28-32. [*Churikā* and *kartṛkā* have been distinguished.—Ed.]

15 *Ind. Ant.*, 1918, p. 137 ; cf. Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, pp. 540 ff.

16 *VRS. Rep.*, 1929-30, pp. 9-10, Fig. 2.

17 *IHQ*, Vol. VI, 1930, pp. 465-70 and Plate.

Its left hands hold *sarpa*, *ḍamaru*, *kaumudī* and a full-blown lotus (*padma*), and its right hands *khaṭvāṅga*, *triśūla*, *śakti* and *padma*. The image has a pointed nimbus with a *kīrtimukha* at the top and two flying figures of Vidyādhara on two sides of it. At the back are shown flames tapering towards the top. It is richly jewelled, but does not wear any breast-plate, though a thin scarf is shown across the chest. It wears elaborately carved *kaṇṭha-hāra*, *karṇa-kuṇḍala*, *śiro-bandha*, *kaṭi-bandha* and *yajñopavīta*. Though the face of the main figure is slightly mutilated, the pointed *tilaka* or the third eye is yet visible. Each of the other two faces, on the left and right of the main figure, also wears *jaṭāmukuta* and has three eyes, and one of the two is shown as bearded with the whole range of teeth exposed. The main deity stands erect on a full-blown lotus or *padma-pīṭha*. A small dagger passes through the girdle and is attached to the right of the image. On either side are two arrow-shooting female figures. They are Uṣas and Pratyūṣas. On the extreme right of the image is the bearded figure of Piṅgala holding pen and inkstand. On the left of the image, stands Daṇḍin grasping the handle of a sword. There are also two female figures holding whisks, who are the consorts of the Sun-god. On a *padma-pīṭha* in front of the main image, stands the goddess Pṛthvī. In front of this again is represented a female figure, with developed breasts wrongly identified by K. C. Sarkar as Aruṇa, the charioteer of the Sun-god. The figure has a serpent-hood behind her head and a cord in her right hand. She is riding on a Makara and waves are visible by her side. She may represent Gaṅgā.

The most ancient image of Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava is from Gandhawal. It is not earlier than the tenth century. The Bhargaon and Manda images are of the 11th and 12th centuries respectively, the Chidambaram image being undoubtedly much later. It is regrettable that the Mārtaṇḍa of Kashmir is much disfigured; but the figures of Bhairava and a multi-faced Śiva in a niche of the temple indicate Śaiva affinity.

XIV

**RELIGIOUS LIFE AS REPRESENTED IN A SCULPTURE
OF KONARAK**

K. S. Behera, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar

The sculptures of the Sun Temple of Konarak are not only important for their symbolic and aesthetic significance, but they also provide valuable material for the reconstruction of the socio-religious life of Orissa in the middle of the 13th century A.D., when the temple was built. Everyday life, customs, amusements, weapons and furniture—these are some of the interesting aspects of Indian life on which the sculptures offer glimpses by tangible representations. To a scholar interested in religion too, the sculptures are valuable, as they throw considerable light on the religious life of the age. From the sculptures, we can get an idea about the different aspects of religious life. The sculptures throw light on the images of gods and goddesses, their iconography, mode of worship, etc. As we get a visual treatment, the sculptural data are perhaps more valuable than the theoretical references in literature; however, the value of the literary source cannot be underestimated for both corroborate and supplement each other. In the following pages, I confine myself to a single panel, known to scholars for over half a century, because, I believe, it captures the essence of the religious life of Orissa not merely during the time of Narasimha I (1239-65 A.D.), the builder of the Konarak temple, but also reflects the feeling of harmony and goodwill that sustained the society in the Gaṅga epoch (1114-1435 A.D.).

The unique panel depicts the worship of Mahiṣāsuramardini, Puruṣottama-Jagannātha and the Śiva-liṅga by a royal personage. There are three sculptures illustrating the same theme. One of them is preserved in the Museum of the Archaeological Survey of India at Konarak,¹ another at the National Museum,

1 Konarak Museum, Regd. No. 174.

New Delhi,² while a third relief is *in situ* on the wall of the platform of the main temple complex on the southern side.³ In the sculpture of the platform, Śiva-liṅga, Durgā and Jagannātha are shown on a single pedestal and the king has come with his attendants for worship. In the chlorite sculpture, now preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi, the scene is represented inside a pavilion whose roof, made in two tiers, is crowned by a *kalasa* flanked by a lion on either side. The deities are placed on two pedestals having miniature *pidhā* temples as their background; on one pedestal we find Durgā and on another, Jagannātha and Śiva-liṅga are installed. In this representation, a single priest is seen welcoming the king who bends with folded hands. In the lower compartment are depicted several priestly figures.

The sculpture of the Konarak Museum, though badly damaged, depicts the same theme. In this sculpture too, there are two pedestals, one of them being occupied by Śiva-liṅga and Jagannātha. The image of Jagannātha shows that his shape is not different from what we have now. He holds a conchshell-like object in the right hand. The depiction of the hand is surprising. Perhaps the artist depicts Jagannātha when he is dressed for a ceremonial occasion. Even now during the *Sunā-veśa* ceremony, the god is provided with two artificial hands in which he holds *śaṅkha* and *cakra*. In the sculpture, three priests are looking towards the king and are probably welcoming him. The person holding a bowl in his left hand and wearing *yajñopavīta*, evidently represents the chief priest. The king bends perhaps to accept *prasāda* from the priest. His two hands have disappeared. In the lower compartment of the sculpture, there are twelve priestly figures.

There have been several interpretations of this panel. Bishan Swarup holds that the scene 'represents Rāma going to

2 National Museum, Regd. No. 50. 182, Ht. 86.5 cms., W. 47 cms.

3 Of the three sculptures, two are of chlorite. The chlorite sculptures were discovered from among the debris around the temple when the sanctum was excavated. See *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1906-07*, p. 41.

worship the Śiva-liṅga at Rameswaram'.⁴ He further adds : "The presence of Durgā killing Mahiṣāsura also confirms this view, as we know from the *Skanda Purāṇa* that Mahiṣāsura was born near Rameswaram and the incarnation of Durgā to kill him was at that place."⁵ Bishan Swarup's interpretation is no doubt far-fetched and misleading. According to T. Bloch, as the image of Puruṣottama-Jagannātha is shown between the Śiva-liṅga and Durgā, the sculpture indicates that originally the cult of Jagannātha at Purī was not, as it is at present, associated with the religion of the Vaiṣṇavas, but with that of the Śaivas.⁶ To him the sculpture suggests that, 'at the time when Konarak was built, Jagannātha was associated with Śiva and Durgā and not as at present with Balarāma and Subhadrā, and that the change might be attributed to the great Vaiṣṇava revival that spread over Northern India in the 14th and 15th centuries under the influence of religious teachers like Caitany.'⁷ However, this interpretation also does not appear to be convincing. An inscription (dated 1237 A.D.) of Gaṅga Anaṅgabhīma III in the Pātāleśvara (Śiva) temple situated within the inner enclosure of the Jagannātha temple at Purī, refers to Halin (Balarāma), Cakrin (Kṛṣṇa-Viṣṇu) and Subhadrā.⁸ Candrādevī, daughter of Anaṅgabhīma III, who built the Puruṣottama temple at Ekāmra (locally known as the Anantavāsudeva temple) in 1278 A.D., installed the images of Bala (Balarāma) Kṛṣṇa and Subhadrā.⁹ From these facts it would appear that the deity Puruṣottama-Jagannātha was being worshipped at Purī along with Balarāma and Subhadrā. T. Bloch also believed that the king with his followers represented the 'Sun-god with his planets'. This assumption, too, is no doubt arbitrary. As the sculptures formed parts of the temple, it is reasonable to identify the king with Narasiṃha I, the builder of the Konarak

4 Bishan Swarup, *Konarka*, Cuttack, 1910, p. 15.

5 *Loc. cit.*

6 *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report*, 1907-08, p. 4.

7 See T. Bloch's views quoted by Bishan Swarup, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

8 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXX, pp. 201-02.

9 *Orissa Historical Research Journal*, Vol. I, No. 4, pp. 281-84.

temple. A number of sculptures depict a king in various situations.¹⁰ He sits with folded hands laying down his sword at the feet of the Sun-god. He is depicted on the front *rāhā* of the superb *simhāsana* meant for the presiding deity. Another sculptured panel shows the king demonstrating his skill as an archer, and still another depicts him in the company of learned men. In another panel, he is shown as sitting on a swing being surrounded by female attendants. Several panels in the *pābhāga* of the main temple are also suggestive of some episodes from the life of a king.¹¹ It is significant that in all these panels, the honoured status of the king is well brought out by making him prominent in stature than his attendants and other persons. His majestic pose and bearing singles him out from any gathering as a person of exalted position. In all these sculptured panels there are some common features, and the striking similarity of all the royal portraits admits of one interpretation, i.e., they represent one and the same ruler who is evidently king Narasimha I. The panel representing the king as worshipping the Śiva-liṅga, Durgā and Puruṣottama-Jagannātha has a striking parallel in the Kapilās *kalasa* inscription which describes king Narasimha I as *Paramamāhēśvara*, *Durgā-putra* and *Puruṣottama-putra*.¹² Thus the royal person of the Konarak sculpture can be safely identified with Narasimha I on the basis of the indications furnished by the Kapilās inscription as well as the close similarity of the king with other such sculptures proves that the king honoured Śaiva, Śākta and Vaiṣṇava deities¹³ and this interesting sculpture sums up the religious history of Orissa indicating the progress of Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Śāktism. In the religious sphere, Narasimha I seems to have shared the same vision as that of his father Anaṅga-bhīma III, who is styled as *Paramavaiṣṇava*, *Paramamāhēśvara*,

10 A. K. Bhattacharya, 'Konarak and its Builder', *Oriental Art*, N. S., Vol. VI, No. I, 1960, pp. 30-32.

11 Debala Mitra, *Konarak*, Archaeological Survey of India, 1960, p. 66.

12 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXIII, pp. 41-45, Inscription No. 2.

13 In the sculpture, the image of Puruṣottama-Jagannātha represented Vaiṣṇavism. In the *Bhagavadgītā* (XV. 18), Kṛṣṇa declares that he is

Durgā-putra, *Śrī-Puruṣottama-putra* and *Rudra-putra* in the Draksharama temple inscription.¹⁴ In his outlook, Narasimha I may be compared with the Maukhari chieftain Anantavarman (5th century A.D.) who installed images of Kṛṣṇa, Bhūtapati (Śiva) and Kātyāyanī (Durgā).¹⁵ That Narasimha I honoured deities of different religions admits of no doubt. He was the builder of the Sun temple of Konarak. He is also known to have visited the Varāha-Narasimha temple at Simhachalam¹⁶ and, according to his orders, his general carried on a thorough renovation of the Simhachalam temple by building its *vimāna*, *mukhamandapa* and *nāṭya-mandapa*.¹⁷ The devotion of the king for Śiva is evident from his inscription at the Liṅgarāja temple, Bhubaneswar, which records donations for Kṛttivāsas.¹⁸ He also built the Śikhareśvara (Śiva) temple on the top of the Kapilās hill in Dhenkanal.¹⁹ The devotion of the Gaṅga rulers for Puruṣottama-Jagannātha is well known since Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga built the Jagannātha Temple. From the time of

celebrated in the world as Puruṣottama. Kālidāsa used Puruṣottama as a name for Viṣṇu (*Raghu*, III. 49). King Śrīdharaṇarāta of Bengal, being a *Paramavaiṣṇava*, was devoted to Puruṣottama (*IHQ*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 221 ff). King Netṭabhaṅja II of the Bhaṅja dynasty of Orissa, who was a *Paramavaiṣṇava*, probably regarded Puruṣottama as his family deity, and his copperplate inscription (*OHRJ*, Vol. XI, No. I, p. 16) refers to *Śrī-Deva-Puruṣottamasya cakrapratiṣṭhā*. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (trans. H. H. Wilson, 3rd ed., p. 469) suggests that Kṛṣṇa, Jagannātha and Puruṣottama are the same. From these it is evident that Puruṣottama was identical with Kṛṣṇa-Viṣṇu. The deity at Purī, which is known as Puruṣottama in several inscriptions (the name Jagannātha appears for the first time in the inscriptions of Bhānu-deva II, 1306-28 A. D., *SII*, Vol. VI, No. 714 ; Vol. V, No. 1214), evidently had close connections with Vaiṣṇavism. The *Bārhaspatya Arthaśāstra* (not earlier than 12th century A. D.) mentions Puruṣottama as one of the eight famous Vaiṣṇava *tīrthas* of India. [This is inadequate for proving the early recognition of the god of Purī.—Ed.]

14 *SII*, Vol. IV, No. 1329; *JIH*, Vol. XXXV, pp. 78-79.

15 *CII*, Vol. III, Nos. 48-50.

16 *SII*, Vol. VI, Nos. 1188, 1197.

17 *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, No. 1142.

18 *OHRJ*, Vol. I, No. 4, 1953, pp. 301-05.

19 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXIII, pp. 41-45, Inscription No. 1.

Anaṅgabhīma III, the territory over which the Gaṅgas ruled is styled *Puruṣottama-sāmrājya* (empire of Puruṣottama).²⁰

Thus the sculpture embodies the religious tolerance of the monarch which again is but a manifestation of the religious atmosphere of the time. The panel emphasizes the reconciliation and rapprochement among the three major cults, i.e. Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Śāktism. The policy of honouring Śiva, Durgā and Jagannātha is not a matter of political strategy for establishing social cohesion and solidarity in the farflung empire; on the other hand, the policy was the product of the age, reflecting the general religio-cultural milieu of the society. Over the centuries and especially in the Gaṅga epoch, harmony was the keynote of the religious life, and this in its turn exercised a profound influence over the monarchs. In the society there was no rivalry or ill feeling among the followers of different sects. Attempts were made at a satisfactory synthesis of different religions. It may be claimed that this religious development, which originated from among the people and followers of different sects, was given the seal of approval by the monarch through his liberal policy. The greatness of the rulers lies in understanding the spirit of the times and in re-orienting their policy to suit the situation.* For example, the deity Puruṣottama-Jagannātha was being worshipped at Puri long before the Gaṅgas occupied Orissa.²¹ In fact, in the earlier part of his life, Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga was a *Parama-*

20 *JKHRS*, Vol. I, pp. 251 ff. [See *Ind. Cult.*, Vol. VI, p. 73.—Ed.]

*[There is really no evidence in favour of such conjectures.—Ed.]

21 The antiquity of the worship of Jagannātha at Puri has been sometimes traced back to the *Rgveda*. An enigmatic verse of the *Rgveda* (X.155.3) refers to a log of wood which, according to Sāyaṇa and Raghunandana, represents the wooden image of Puruṣottama-Jagannātha. The *Viṣṇudharma* (not later than 300 A. D.), while enumerating the holy places associated with Kṛṣṇa worship, says that Kṛṣṇa was worshipped as Puruṣottama in the Oḍra country (*Oḍre tu Puruṣottamam*). See R.C. Hazra, *Studies in the Upapurāṇas*, Calcutta, 1958, Vol. I, p. 123, note 43. Literary and epigraphic evidences clearly prove that by the 10th-11th century A. D., the sanctity of modern Puri as the seat of Puruṣottama had been well established. The Maihar copper-plate (middle of the 10th century A.D.) refers to Puruṣo-

māhēśvara;²² but subsequently he became a *Parama-vaiṣṇava*.²³ In the Cāteśvara Inscription, he is spoken of as the Narasiṃha incarnation of Viṣṇu.²⁴ Verse 27 of the Nagari plates of Anaṅgabhīma III makes us believe that Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga built the temple of Puruṣottama-Jagannātha at Puri.²⁵ The fact that he became Vaiṣṇava after the conquest of Orissa is significant for it shows how the deity of the people became his patron deity.

The religious spirit of the time found expression in the erection of temples during the Gaṅga period. Among the Śiva temples of the period, special mention may be made of the Cāteśvara temple at Kisanpur (Cuttack District), Dakṣa Prajāpati temple at Banpur, Caṇḍeśvara temple at Taṅgi, Somanātha temple at Budhapada, Śiva temple at Ganesvarpur, Yameśvara temple at Bhubaneswar, Śobhaneśvara temple at Neyali, etc. Among the Viṣṇu temples, reference may be made to the Mādhavānanda temple at Madhava, and the Anantavāsudeva temple at Bhubaneswar. These indicate that Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism flourished in the society side by side and a noble attempt was made to bring about a rapprochement between these two religions. Bhubaneswar, which was a centre of

ttama in the Oḍra country (*Oḍreṣu Puruṣottamam*)—*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXV, pp. 171-75. The Kalidindi grant and Karumelli plates of Eastern Cālukya Rājarāja I begins with *Śrīdhāmnali Puruṣottamasya*—*Ep. Ind.* Vol. XXIX, p. 65; *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XIV, p. 50. The Govindapur inscription (1137-38 A.D.) mentions that poet Gaṅgādhara's father Manoratha visited Puruṣottama—*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. II, p. 334. Kṛṣṇamiśra in his *Prabodhacandrodaya* (composed in the reign of Kīrtivarman, c. 1070-1100 A.D.) makes a reference to the temple of Puruṣottama in Utkaladeśa. The sanctity of Puruṣottama is described in several Purāṇas like *Padma*, *Brahma*, *Skanda*, etc. [In our opinion, the *Viṣṇudharma* reference to Puruṣottama in Oḍra is not earlier than the early medieval period. Hazra's dating of none of the Purāṇas is applicable to the entire content of a Purāṇa. The explanation of the Rgvedic passage by the medieval writers has to be taken equally with a grain of salt. The Maihar inscription is not a copper-plate grant.—Ed.]

22 *JAHRS*, Vol. VIII, pp. 183 ff.

23 *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XVIII, p. 165 (Vizagapatam plates of Śaka 1040).

24 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXIX, p. 126.

25 *Ibid.*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 251-52. [The verse also occurs elsewhere.—Ed.]

Śaivism, had a Viṣṇu temple, i.e. the Anantavāsudeva temple built in 1278 by Candrādevī, daughter of Anaṅgabhīma III. The worship at the Liṅgarāja underwent profound change because of Viṣṇuite influences. The presiding deity came to be called Harihara and even the *Vāhāna-stambha* was made to symbolise this aspect.²⁶ The religious climate can be gleaned from the Śobhaneśvara inscription. The *praśasti* begins with the invocation *Namaḥ Śivāya*; but it records that the temple was built in honour of Viṣṇu and Śiva (*Visnor = Bhavānīpateḥ*).²⁷ The reconciliation between the Śakti cult and Vaiṣṇavism was also another feature of the religious life. In the Mādhavānanda temple, a small image of Maḥiṣāsūramardini is being worshipped along with the image of Viṣṇu which is the presiding deity of the temple. A number of syncretistic images, which belong to the Gaṅga period, express the spirit of reconciliation and cordial relations that prevailed among the followers of different sects.*

Even at Konarak, the sculpture depicting Durgā, Jagannātha and Śiva-liṅga does not offer an isolated example. A few other sculptures also illustrate this tendency. There is another interesting panel which depicts five divinities like Indra, Brahman, Śiva, Viṣṇu and Sūrya. As Gaṇeśa is absent, this *pañcādevatā* panel cannot possibly be associated with the *pañcopāsana* of the Smārtas; but there can be no doubt about the syncretistic philosophy behind this slab. Another sculpture, only the lower half of which is preserved, combining the features of Sūrya and Viṣṇu, represents a composite figure of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa. A four-armed divinity, holding lotus flowers in the two upper hands and *triśūla* in the lower right hand,

26 K. C. Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneswar*, 1961, pp. 257-62.

27 S. N. Rajaguru, *Inscriptions of Orissa*, Vol. III, Part II, Bhubaneswar, 1961, p. 342.

*[The claim of the author is similar to that of Prof. U. Thakur made on behalf of Mithilā and the neighbouring regions elsewhere in this volume. —Ed.]

stands on a *triratha*, chariot drawn by seven horses.²⁸ The image either represents an Āditya (the iconographic features partially agree with the Ādityas, Bhaga and Vivasvat) or it may stand for a syncretistic image of Śiva-Sūrya. Thus the religious atmosphere was one of mutual tolerance and goodwill. It is against this background that the unique scene representing worship of the Śiva-liṅga, Durgā and Jagannātha, is to be judged. The contemporary and concrete evidence provided by this panel indicates the spirit of harmony that characterised the religious life of Orissa during the period.²⁹

28 T. N. Ramachandran, 'An Interesting Sūrya Sculpture from Konarka', *Sarupa Bharatī*, Vishveshvaranand Indological Series, No. 6, pp. 280-85.

29 [On certain problems relating to the god Puruṣottama-Jagannātha of Puri often referred to in the paper, see Sircar, *Studies in the Religious Life of Ancient and Medieval India*, pp. 59-78 (Chapter IV).—Ed.]

XV

LAKṢMĪ IN ŚRĪVAIṢṆAVA THEOLOGY*

Ramesh Kumar Billorey, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC,
Calcutta University

In the the early Viṣṇuite pantheon, Lakṣmī had only a minor place. It was in the Gupta period that the worship of the goddess, enthroned beside Nārāyaṇa, became an important feature of Vaiṣṇavism.¹

In the system of Rāmānuja (c. 1017–1137 A.D.), the *guru* or preceptor has been assigned a key role and Lakṣmī is considered as the greatest among these *gurus*. The *guru* helps the individual in his attempt of spiritual perfection. He is full of compassion and takes upon himself the responsibility of commending his ward to Īśvara. Being the embodiment of compassion, Lakṣmī is likened to a mother who readily pardons her child for its misbehaviour.² Thus Lakṣmī becomes in later Vaiṣṇavism the divine mother of the universe, who sometimes intercedes with God on behalf of the weak and erring humanity. She is the power united eternally with the Lord. “While Īśvara symbolises justice, Lakṣmī stands for ‘mercy.’”³ God in his essential nature is supposed to be so exalted that ‘mediating principles must intervene between him and the crude world of men and things’, and this mediator’s role is assigned to Lakṣmī who typifies, according to Rāmānuja, the activity of the supreme in the region of the finite.⁴ She is the copula between the finite and the infinite and bridges the gulf between the two.⁵

*[The revised copy of the article was received on 6.10.71.—Ed.]

1 H. C. Raychaudhuri, *Materials for the Study of the Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Sect*, Calcutta, 1920, pp. 105-06.

2 S. Srinivasachar, ‘Ayangars’, *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, September 20, 1970.

3 S. Radhakrishnan, *The Vedānta according to Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja*, London, 1928, p. 255.

4 N. Macnicol, *Indian Theism*, New Delhi, 1968, p. 109.

5 P. N. Srinivasachari, *Rāmānuja’s Idea of the Finite Self*, p. 84.

The intercession of Śrī or Lakṣmī is considered by Rāmānuja as vital in securing Divine Grace. This significant position assigned to the goddess explains why the theology is known as Śrīvaiṣṇavism.

About the thirteenth century, the distinction between the Teṅgalai (Southern School) and Vaḍagalai (Northern School) became accentuated, and this led to schism in the Śrīvaiṣṇava camp. The Vaḍagalai, who adopt elements of Śākta theology in their conception of Lakṣmī, believe that the consort of Viṣṇu is, like him, uncreated and is to be equally worshipped as the bestower of grace. The Teṅgalai, on the other hand, give her an independent personality. They look upon her as created and, though divine, merely a mediatrix or channel of the Lord's grace.⁶

Thus the importance of the goddess is clearly emphasised in Śrīvaiṣṇavism.⁷ The conception of the goddess Lakṣmī as a mother, however, may be traced back to earlier literary and art traditions of our ancient land.

6 S. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

7 J. N. Banerjea, *Paurāṇic and Tāntric Religion*, p. 60.

XVI

TĀNTRIC CULT IN EASTERN INDIA

Upendra Thakur, Magadh University, Bodhgaya

The Tantras may rightly be termed as 'so many encyclopaedias of the knowledge of their time' as they deal with all matter, of 'common belief and interest from the doctrine of the origin of the world to the laws which govern kings and the societies...medicine and science generally.' "The Tantra is... the repository of esoteric belief and practices, particularly those relating to *yoga* and *mantra-tattva*."¹ In them we find the description of the Supreme Being, the creation and destruction of the Universe, the classification of creatures, the origin and worship of the gods, the heavenly bodies, different worlds and hells, man and woman, *cakra* (centre of the human body), *dharma*, *āśramas* and the sacraments, *mantra*, *yantra* (magic diagram), various forms of spiritual training, *japa*, *vrata*, worship (internal and external), medicine, science and many other things.

It has been argued that the Tantras represent a recent *śāstra* and are largely the creation of the people of Eastern India which is supposed to be its stronghold. The antiquity of the Tantra has, however, been proved beyond doubt to be as that of the Śruti itself.² In fact, not only in Eastern India, but throughout the whole of India, the upper classes of the Hindu community are governed by the Tāntric religion as far as initiation (*dīkṣā*) is concerned. There are Śāktas, Vaiṣṇavas and Śaivas all over the country. The Śāktas are initiated by the Śakti-mantra, the Vaiṣṇavas by the Viṣṇu-mantra and the

1 Bhattacharya, *Māṭṛkābheda Tantram*, intro., p. 3; Avalon, *Principles of Tantra (Tantratattva)*, pref., pp. 1 ff., 49-50.

2 Bhattacharya, *op. cit.*, pp. 7 ff.; Avalon *op. cit.*, pp. 58 ff.; D. N. Bose, *Tantras: their Philosophy and Occult Secrets*, pp. 2ff. [It may be said that the Śruti is predominantly Aryan and the Tantra primarily Nonaryan.—Ed.]

Śaivas by the Śiva-mantra. All these *mantras* are the exclusive property of the Tantra. Like Mithilā, Madras, Bengal, Bombay, Kāśī (Banaras), Kashmir, Assam and other such notable places of India have Śāktas, Vaiṣṇavas and Śaivas in a large number following the Tāntric system.* It is, therefore, absurd to argue that this system is the exclusive creation of the people of Eastern India only. Sādhakas have appeared on the scene almost everywhere, and the Maithila Sādhakas and Paṇḍitas, like those of Bengal and other places, have 'only prepared compendia and developed the practical side of it to a considerable extent' for the benefit of humanity at large.³

It is interesting to note that the Śakti-devatā (the Mother-goddess) is worshipped and revered and the Śakti-pīṭhas (the seats of the Mother-goddess) are established in almost all parts of India : Kāmākhyā is worshipped in Kāmarūpa ; Vindhya-vāsini on the Vindhya hills ; Yogamāyā and Pūrṇamāsī at Vṛndāvana ; Annapūrṇā, Saṁkaṭā, Tripurabhairavī, the sixty-four Yoginis, Kālabhairavī, Durgā, Śītalā, Maṅgalā and other Devis at Kāśī ; Guhyeśvarī in Nepal ; Gāyatrī and Sāvitṛī in Rajasthan ; Lalitā at Prayāga ; Ugratārā in Mithilā (Tirhut) ; Jayakālī in Calcutta ; Jvālāmukhī⁴, and Chinnamastā in and near Jalandhar ; Kṣīrabhavānī near Kashmir and other Devis in almost all parts of India. Vimalā, Sarasvatī, Bhuvaneśvarī, Kālī and Lakṣmī are worshipped in Utkala, the seat of Lord Jagannātha.⁵ To say that Raghunandana Bhaṭṭācārya of Bengal was the first to prescribe the worship of Durgā, as provided for in the Tantra, would be quite wrong and misleading for we know that many other earlier thinkers in Mithilā, Bengal and elsewhere had done so. Vidyāpati, Śrīdatta, Harinātha Upādhyāya, Vidyādhara, Ratnākara, Bhojadeva, Jimūta-

*[All parts of India are not represented by the extant Tantra works.—Ed.]

3 Bhattacharya, *op. cit.*, p. 7 ; Avalon, *op. cit.*, pp. 59ff. ; also cf. S. B. Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, pp. 13ff.

4 Jvālāmukhī, Caṇḍī, Tārā, Kālī, Durgā, etc., are also worshipped in Mithilā at different places.

5 For further details, see Avalon, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64.

vāhana, Halāyudha, Vācaspati-miśra, Mādhavācārya and even Śaṅkarācārya admitted the authority of the Tantra while explaining philosophical doctrines. Vācaspati-miśra, the celebrated Maithila thinker and commentator on the six Darśanas, has, in his commentary on the *Pātāñjala-darśana*, recommended *dhyāna* of the Devatās as prescribed in the Tantras.⁶ Moreover, many well-known books written in Mithilā and elsewhere, before the age of Raghunandana, contain provisions for Durgā-pūjā, e.g. the *Durgābhaktitaraṅgiṇī*, *Saṁvatsarapradīpa*, *Kālakaumudī*, *Jyotiṣārṇava*, *Smṛtisāgara*, *Kalpataru*, *Kṛtyamahārṇava*, *Kṛtyaratnākara*, *Kṛtyatattvārṇava*, *Durgābhaktiprakāśa*, *Kālanirṇaya*, *Pūjāratnākara* and others dealing with Durgā and Kālī.⁷

The Bengali practice of worshipping earthen images of Durgā or Kālī with great pomp and ceremony is followed all over Eastern India. It is true that this practice does not receive the same favour in other parts of India as in Mithilā and Bengal ; but it is also true that she is everywhere worshipped in *ghaṭas* (earthen jars). Shrines containing her images are reverentially visited, nine-day *vratas* performed, fasts duly observed and the sacred *Caṇḍī* read on the *Mahāṣṭamī* day. Even now womenfolk bathe in the rivers or tanks early every morning for the first nine days of the bright fortnight of the month of Āśvina and worship small images of the Devī, made of clay, with all devotion. All these undoubtedly show that this practice of worshipping the Devī has been followed from time immemorial.

The most peculiar characteristic of this religion is that women and Śūdras are not prohibited from practising the *sādhana*. The *Rudrayāmala* says that a woman may also be a *Guru* who is *kulīna* (practising *kulācāra*), of auspicious appearance, fair-faced and lotus-eyed, endowed with intellect, calmness of mind, proficient in *mantras* and in their meanings, ever engaged in *japa* and devoted to the worship of her

6 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 67.

7 *Ibid.*, pp. 65ff. [Add the Purāṇas like *Kālikā* to the list.—Ed.]

Iṣṭadevatā.⁸ The *Gautamīya Tantra* declares that the people of all castes, irrespective of sex, may receive *mantras*.⁹ In the *Cakra* there is no caste at all, even the lowest Cāṇḍāla being deemed, whilst therein, higher than the Brāhmaṇa. The *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*¹⁰ says : "That low Kaula who refuses to initiate a Cāṇḍāla or Yavana into the Kaula-dharma, considering them to be inferior, or a woman out of disrespect for her, goes the downward way. All two-footed beings in this world, from the Vipra (Brāhmaṇa) to the inferior castes, are competent for *kulācāra*." This is no doubt the most revolutionary aspect of this religion which in the course of centuries attracted millions of followers to its fold.

Another great factor that contributed to its tremendous growth and popularity is that, in the Tantras, the duties of each of the castes as well as those of the king are not prescribed much differently from Manu, the great law-giver. The *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* speaks very highly of the family life. It rigorously prescribes that one who has children, wife or such near relations to maintain should never be allowed to take to ascetic life. We have in the ninth chapter of the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*, *Samśkāras*, 'sacraments from conception until marriage', entirely in consonance with Brāhmaṇical texts. In the tenth chapter, we have the direction for the disposal and the propitiation of the dead (*śrāddha*). "A peculiarity of the Śāktas in connection with marriage consists in the fact that, side by side with the Brāhma marriage for which the Brāhmaṇic prescriptions are valid, there is also a Śaiva marriage, that is, a kind of marriage for a limited period, which is only permitted to the members of the circle (*cakra*) of the initiated. But children out of such marriage are not legitimate and do not inherit."¹¹ Thus the Brāhmaṇical law also applied to the Śāktas and as

8 *Ibid.*, pp. 807 ff.

9 Cf. *sarva-varṇ-ādhikarāś=ca nārīṇāṃ yogam=eva ca*.

10 XIV. 187 f.

11 Avalon, *op. cit.*, p. 117. It is, however, incorrect to call them illegitimate children. On the other hand, offsprings of a Brāhma marriage are preferential inheritors.

such, the section concerning civil and criminal law in the eleventh and twelfth chapters of the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* substantially agrees with Manu.*

The prevalent Vedic ritualism of the day was too powerless to face the new communities springing up all over the country. From the Karma-kāṇḍa, we have, therefore, to turn to Jñāna-kāṇḍa in the Vedic religion, which finds elaborate representation in the Upaniṣads. Besides, the earliest ritualism of *yajñas* being philosophised upon in the earlier Upaniṣads, we find that the foundation for a new elaborate ritualism was fully laid in many of the later Upaniṣads. Keeping in view the new changes, the philosophy of *Pañc-opāsana* (fivefold worship, viz. the worship of Śiva, Devī, Sun, Gaṇeśa and Viṣṇu) was developed out of the mystery of the Parṇava (*Om*), of which some features are also to be clearly seen in the Brāhmaṇas.¹² As a matter of fact, such *upakaraṇas* of Tāntric worship as grass, leaves, water, etc., seem to have been adopted from Vedic worship along with their appropriate incantations.** This may thus be regarded as the earliest configuration which Tāntricism had on the eve of 'these silent but mighty social upheavals through which the Aryanisation of vast and increasing multitudes of new races proceeded in pre-Buddhistic India, and which had their culmination in the eventful centuries of the Buddhistic *coup de grace*.'¹³

The great problem to be tackled was the Aryanisation of this new India that was rising and surging from every side against the fast-dwindling centres of old Vedic orthodoxy struggling hard for its existence. The religious movements of the Bhāgavatas, Śāktas, Sauras, Śaivas, Gāṇapatyas, Jains and Buddhists absorbed many of the Nonaryan races and cast their life in the mould of the Vedic spiritual ideal which largely minimised the gulf existing between them and the Vedic ortho-

*[The *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* is regarded by some to be a modern work.—Ed.]

¹² Cf. the discourse on the conception of Śiva.

**[This can hardly be the whole truth.—Ed.]

¹³ Avalon, *op. cit.*, p. 554.

doxy, ending in their gradual amalgamation in the course of a few centuries. Thus the pre-Buddhistic phase of Tāntric worship is a fact to be reckoned with in the early history of India much before the appearance of the Buddha. Its foundation was so widely and firmly established that, notwithstanding ceaseless efforts, Buddhism could not dislodge it, but was in turn itself swallowed up by this Tāntric worship within the short span of a few centuries. This transformed Buddhism soon appeared on the arena in its new attractive garb as the Mahāyāna.¹⁴

The worship of Śakti was predominant throughout Eastern India. Like the worship of Śiva, the worship of Śakti was equally widespread. There is, however, a marked paucity of legends and stories recording the attainment of *siddhi* by the worshippers of lord Śiva whereas the stories regarding Śākta devotees attaining miraculous powers are numerous. This is probably because Śakti was supposed to give *siddhi* only ; but the god who could offer *mukti* or salvation was Lord Śiva, and it was certainly a higher thing. Some of the greatest saints and *upāsakas* of Mithilā, such as Devāditya, Vardhamāna, Madana Upādhyāya, Gokulanātha Upādhyāya, Mahārāja Rāmeśvarasimha, Gaṇanātha Upādhyāya, Lakṣmīnātha Gosāin and a host of others, were associated with Śakti. Every household has a Gosāuni (Śakti goddess). There are still many *pīṭhas* and centres of Tāntricism where Sādhakas from different parts of the country come to practise *sādhana*. Moreover, the first verse taught to a child is in praise of Śakti. The popularity of *aripaṇa* or *alipana* (painted *yantras* on the ground); the names of Maithilis and Bengalis such as Tantradhārī, Tantranātha, Śaktinātha, Khaḍgadhārī, Tārācaraṇa, Ādyācaraṇa, etc., the Śābara rites of women, the vogue of fish and meat eating, *Pāga* or Tāntric headdress, the offering of cooked rice in sweetened milk and the feeding of *Kumārīs* (virgins), known as the *Pātari* ceremony, on all auspicious occasions, the widespread public worship of the earthen image of Durgā on the

14 For other details, see *ibid.*, pp. 556 ff.

Daśaharā or Vijayā-daśamī ; the worship of the *Liṅgam* (a veritable Tāntric symbol), the Mātṛkā-pūjā, the performance of *Nainā-yogin* and the prevalence of *dīkṣā* (*iṣṭamantra-grahaṇa*)—all these clearly point to the great importance of the Śakti cult in the life of the people of Eastern India. But, all told, the fact remains that the glory and honour that the Tantras had, and received, in the time of those great Sādhakas and Mahārājas Kṛṣṇacandra and Śivacandra of Bengal and Lakṣmī-śvarasimha and Rāmeśvarasimha of Mithilā no longer exist. This is the reason why the Tāntric Sādhakas of Bengal and Mithilā are not so well-known at present.

This reverence for and adoration of Śakti has immensely influenced the script and literature of the land. Not only are there a large number of Tāntric works written and compiled in Sanskrit, not only are there almost all writers praising Śakti or the Primal (*Ādyā*) Energy, but the very script of eastern India have developed in accordance with Tāntric *yantras*.^{*} The history of this peculiar development of Varṇas has been elaborately dealt with in the *Kāmadhenu Tantra* and the *Varṇoddhāra Tantra*.¹⁵ The *āñji* sign at the beginning of Maithili alphabet is also due to the Tāntric influence, for it represents the Kuṇḍalinī (*Mūlādhāra*).¹⁶

Another very important result of this Tāntric predominance has been the composition of popular songs concerning the goddess Durgā in local literature, without which no auspicious religious ceremony can ever begin. Besides a large number of songs, there are numerous documents relating to incantations and charms which, though not fully understood now by the experts of the Mantra-śāstra, nonetheless, serve their purpose very well.¹⁷

Thus, the influence of the Tantric practices has been so great upon the life of the people of Eastern India, particularly Mithilā, Bengal and Assam that all their daily activities are

*[We do not agree with this view.—Ed.]

15 Also cf. Woodroffe, *The Garland of Letters* (*Varṇamālā*).

16 *Journal of the Assam Research Society*, Vol. I, p. 3. [The *āñji* developed out of the ancient *Siddham* symbol.—Ed.]

17 *JBRS*, Vol. XXXIII, Parts i-ii. pp. 50-52.

practically dominated and governed by the principles of the Tāntric religion. The Kaula practices and Daśa-mahāvidyā, however, gained wide popularity in course of time. The Kaulas became the protagonists of *Vām-ācāra* or *Vāma-mārga* and Daśamahāvidyā. Kālī, Tārā and Bhuvaneśvarī have now a prominent place in the life of the people. *Āgama* does not necessarily mean 'a sacred book appealed to by the Vāmācārins' as opposed to *Nigama* of the followers of Dakṣiṇ-ācāra. Nor is the term *Vām-ācārin* itself a synonym for *Kaula*, for a person may be the first without being the second.

In early times, Dakṣiṇ-ācāra was more popular and widely practised and produced great Sādhakas. But in course of time (probably about a century ago), people came to be intensely influenced by the Vām-ācāra practices. The mode of worship in the *mārgas* is quite different. It is true, one who follows the *Vām-ācāra* attains *siddhi* sooner ; but it is very difficult to practise it successfully, and as such, there is every chance of a fall in this *mārga*. Vasiṣṭha and other Sādhakas followed *Dakṣiṇ-ācāra* and were great devotees of the goddess Tārā. Great Sādhakas have from time to time appeared on the scene and inspired people to practise this religion. *Dakṣiṇ-ācāra* therefore was (and is still) looked upon with high regard. Innumerable Sādhakas followed this path and their life-history, full of miraculous feats and wonderful achievements, has now passed into legends handed down from generation to generation and is yet an object of popular study and reverence.¹⁸

Side by side with *Dakṣiṇ-ācāra*, *Vām-ācāra* and *Kaula* also gained much popularity and soon gave rise to *Abhicāra-karman*¹⁹ (black magic, mummary, witchcraft, etc.) among the low

18 Umeśa Miśra, *Maithila Saṁskṛti O Sabhyatā* (Maithilī), Part II, p. 18.

19 This *Abhicāra-karman* was unfortunately the indirect result of the *Arimardana-homa* or *Nigraha-homa*, i.e., 'the object of punishing an enemy' fully dealt with in the thirty-first chapter (*Arimardana-homa*) of the *Tantrārāja Tantra* (The King among Tantras), edited by John Woodroffe (Arthur Avalon). Verses 3-6 of the Chapter speak of certain things which should be known regarding the enemy before a *homa* is begun (*ibid.*, pp. 94-95).

classes and women. This had no doubt a dangerously demoralising effect on the morale of the common people, and it was this *Karman* that largely contributed to the unpopularity of the Tantras in general and the growing hatred for the *Sādhakas* in particular. Indeed, the divine qualities inherent in this sect are very difficult to practise, and, therefore, in the absence of the right interpretations and understanding, people took to degrading forms of debauchery under the garb of the Tāntric *sādhana*. The result is obvious. The divine Tantras came to be stigmatised as a libidinous phallic necromancy.

Lakṣmidhara, in his commentary on the thirty-first verse (*śloka*) of the *Saundaryalaharī* of Śaṅkarācārya, has given the names of sixty-four Tantras such as *Candrakalā*, *Jyotsnāvatī*, *Kalānidhi*, *Kulārṇava*, *Kuleśvarī*, *Bhuvaneśvarī*, *Bārhaspatya* and *Durvāsomata*, in which the Brāhmaṇas Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, Śūdras and even the mixed castes have been given equal rights to perform meditation.²⁰ The first three are advised to attain *siddhi* through *Dakṣiṇ-ācāra* practices and the Śūdras and mixed castes are required to undergo *sādhana* through *Vām-ācāra*. It is due to this liberal attitude that there has been no sect-rivalry since hoary past to the present day. One finds Śaivas, Śāktas and Vaiṣṇavas living together in perfect harmony in one and the same family. Whenever fish or meat is prepared in one family, the members, though belonging to the different sects, sit together in one row and take their meals ungrudgingly, the only difference being that the Vaiṣṇavas keep away from taking fish or meat. The Brāhmaṇas daily worship the Śālagrāma (Viṣṇu) and rub *śrīkhaṇḍacandana* and ashes (*bhasma*) of Śiva on their forehead, arms, ears and other parts of body. Side by side with these gods, they worship the Iṣṭadevī, the symbol of Śakti, and also put vermilion marks on their forehead. Durgā-pūjā is celebrated with the same zeal and vigour as Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī or Janmāṣṭamī and Śivarātri.²¹ All this has resulted in a wonderful blending of different religious sects

20 Umeśa Miśra, *op. cit.*, pp. 18 ff.

21 *Loc. cit.*

and perfect harmony among their followers, a feature hardly to be seen elsewhere. Even the most orthodox Brāhmaṇas participate in Muslim religious festivals and also those of the low castes, and *vice versa*. It is, therefore, no exaggeration to say that in this part of the country we have the real Indian culture, in all its broad aspects, still flourishing, to which the celebrated Tāntric religion has made its singular contributions.*

*[The claim advanced by the author in this note is similar to the one made by Sri K. S. Behera on behalf of Orissa of the Gaṅga age elsewhere in this volume.—Ed.]

Supplement

XVII

LINKS BETWEEN EARLY AND LATER BUDDHIST MYTHOLOGY

Jnanranjan Haldar, Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC,
Calcutta University

Buddhist mythology changed its character with the modification of Buddhism through the ages. To find out some connections between early and later Buddhist mythology, we have to know the general history of Buddhism. This religion reveals itself in the following forms in different periods—(1) Early Hīnayāna (c. 450 to 350 B.C.); (2) Later Hīnayāna (c. 350 to 100 B.C.); (3) Early Mahāyāna (c. 100 B.C. to 700 A.D.); and (4) Later Mahāyāna, i.e. Vajrayāna (700 to 1300 A.D.).

History of Buddhism. In the beginning, there were two *yānas*, viz., Sāvaka-yāna and Paccekabuddha-yāna. The former says that the Sāvakas attain *nibbāna* (status of an Arahant), but cannot obtain *bodhi* (enlightenment, status of the Buddha). On the other hand, the Pacceka Buddhas attain Buddhahood, but cannot preach the way of deliverance to the world. These two *yānas* were regarded as Hīnayāna after the development of Mahāyāna, the principal difference between the two being that the Hīnayānists preach Arahant hood as the highest emancipated state and Buddhahood not to be attained by every being, while the Mahāyānists are of the opinion that every individual is pure in origin and can acquire Buddhahood and help others in getting emancipation.

The Mahāyānists claim that the Buddha was regarded as supramundane (*lokottara*) and had been deified from the advent of Mahāyānism (i.e. during Kālāśoka's reign, c. 444 B.C.)* when the Mahāsaṅghika sect sprang up from Hīnayāna. N. Dutta¹ says that some Mahāyānic traces in regard to the

*[The date is wrong according to the Cantonese dotted record.—Ed.]

¹ *Buddhist Sects in India*, p. 268.

conception of the Bodhisattva, the Pāramitā practices, and the goal of Buddhahood are found in the doctrines of the Mahāsaṅghikas and Sarvāstivādins,² and their offshoots. The Mahāyāna incorporates the conception of countless Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, advocates the worship of images of gods, demigods and goddesses and recommends the use of *mantras* for attaining emancipation.

In its later phases, i.e., between the 7th and the 13th century A.D., Mahāyāna Buddhism lost its high ideals of universal love for all mankind and of salvation of all, and yielded to gross superstitions and esoteric and immoral principles (*mantra*, *maṇḍala*, *dhāraṇī*, *mudrā*, etc.) of Tantrism and people thought that these were the easiest means for attaining emancipation. Of these, *mantra* was regarded as the simplest means, and Mahāyāna at this stage was divided into Mantrayāna and Pāramitāyāna. Mantrayāna is the initial stage of Tāntric Buddhism. During this period, *mantra*, *dhāraṇī*, *mudrā*, *maṇḍala*, etc., were emphasised to make people believe in magic, sorcery, charms, etc., which were applied to gods, demigods, ghosts, goblins, demons, fiends, etc. When men and women regarded themselves as manifestations of *Upāya* (*Karuṇā*, universal compassion) and *Prajñā* (*Śūnyatā*, perfect knowledge) and thought that liberation or highest truth would come into light on the combination of *Upāya* (male) and *Prajñā* (female) 'like that of water and milk' and on the immersion of duality in a state of non-duality, the full-fledged Tantrism (Vajrayāna) originated. At this stage, the Yoga or sexo-yogic practices were added to the elements of Mantrayāna.

Vajrayāna attaches much importance to the worship of various gods and goddesses. It considers everything as *vajra* (void or *śūnyatā*). A god is meditated on as *vajra*, nature of the self and the *dharma*s. The image of the god, the *mantras*, the process and articles of worship, the worshipper himself, etc., are all supposed to be *vajra*.

² Sarvāstivāda developed with the Mahīśāsakas and the Mahāsaṅghikas (*ibid.*, p. 136) and belonged to later Hīnayāna.

The ultimate reality in Vajrayāna is identified with the conception of a Lord Supreme (*Bhagavat*) as Vajrasattva, sometimes also called Vajradhara. He is the Supreme God, because he is the non-dual state of *śūnyatā* and *karuṇā*. Those who realise Vajrasattva become Vajrasattvas.

Upāya (male) and *Prajñā* (female) emanate from Vajrasattva who is one and non-dual. This monotheistic idea of Vajrayāna resembles the Buddha's supremacy in early mythology. But with the evolution of the conception of Vajrasattva, the monotheistic god turns into a new and expanded pantheon of gods and goddesses in Vajrayāna. Vajrasattva is the Ādi-Buddha (the primal Enlightened one) who possesses five kinds of knowledge, conceived as his five attributes, from which five kinds of meditation (*dhyānas*) proceed. From these, five deities known as the five Dhyāni-Buddhas or Tathāgatas emanate. They are— (1) Vairocana, (2) Ratnasambhava, (3) Amitābha, (4) Amoghasiddhi and (5) Akṣobhya. They are the presiding deities of the *Skandhas* or elements and have each obtained a divine consort or *śakti* of his own, namely, Vajradhātviśvarī, Locanā, Māmakā, Pāṇḍarā and Ārya-Tārā respectively. Each Dhyāni-Buddha has a particular Bodhisattva as his son and also a certain human Buddha. Vajrasattva himself has a consort who is variously called Vajrasattvātmikā, Vajravārāhī, Prajñāpāramitā, etc. However, though many deities are found in Vajrayāna, the form of *sādhana* is the same in all cases, i.e. when a god is worshipped, he is to be meditated on as in union with *Śakti* or *Prajñā*, enjoying great bliss.³

3 We know the actual process of worship and the nature of meditation in Vajrayāna from the description of the particular *sādhana* of a deity. The Supreme Lord is meditated on with the five Dhāyāni-Buddhas first; then flowers are offered. These five with their respective Śaktis are to be worshipped with offerings of flowers, lamp, incense, etc. Then the devotees confess their sins before the Lord and take refuge in the three jewels, viz., the Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha. After this, the worshippers have to resolve for the deliverance of all and think of the world, both static and dynamic, as All-void, and utter the *mantra*, "Om, I am of the nature of the immutable knowledge, of the void." Next comes the meditation of self as the Lord himself, and that of the various gods and goddesses on either side of the Lord with *mantras*, etc.

In the tenth century A.D., a school known as Kālacakrayāna arose within the fold of Vajrayāna. This is an aspect of Vajrayāna. The supreme deity, according to this school, is called Lord Śri-Kālacakra.⁴ The difference between the two is that, in Kālacakrayāna, are found the introduction and predominance, in the system, of a number of gods and their female energies, having awful and terrible aspects, though as powerful as the celestial Buddhas themselves, and of other dreadful fiends known as Dākinīs, all of whom have to be appeased with *mantra* (charms), magic circles, offerings and sacrifices.

In all ages, Hindu gods and goddesses have been adopted in Buddhism. During its later phases, particularly at the Tāntric stage, the Hindus also borrowed Buddhist goddesses like Mahācinatārā, Jāṅguli and Vajrayoginī and incorporated them into their own pantheon under the names of Tārā, Manasā and Chinnamastā respectively. The deities in Tāntric Buddhism, 'have no independent and real existence apart from the mind of the worshipper and the manner of worship'. They have no external figure, but 'represent purely mental conception of the *sādhaka* who by means of the *sāadhanā* undergoes a detailed mental exercise for the development of his spiritual or psychic powers' for the realisation and visualisation of the deity with whom the worshipper is asked to identify himself. In the state of the highest meditation when the individual soul (variously known as Bodhisattva, Bodhicitta and Jivātman) invokes and combines himself with the Universal or Infinite Soul (variously called Śūnya, Brahman and Paramātman), the deity, i.e. the Śūnya, manifests himself in the mind-sky in flashes and sparks. As the objects or desires of the worshippers are different, the deity appears in various forms, and thus different gods and goddesses are found in the Buddhist pantheon.

4 *Kāla* is the ultimate immutable knowledge (*Prajñā*) or the state of *śūnyatā*, while *cakra* is regarded as the cycle of world process, or the body of the Lord containing the potency of existence of the universe, which is just the principle of *upāya*.

Though the Mahāyāna Buddhist mythology alters its nature and form, it has some connection with the mythology of the Hīnayāna Buddhists. The points of such connection are described below.

The Buddha's Supremacy. As we have said elsewhere,⁵ the Buddha does not speak of any Creator-God, on account of which Hīnayāna Buddhism is considered not a religion, but an ethical system. The Pali Buddhist literature mentions the Hindu doctrine of the never-ending cycles of creation and destruction and says that the regions from *Vehapphala* to *Arūpa-Brahmaloka*⁶ are not subject to destruction which suggests that there is no origin or end of the world. It ever was and will be for ever. On the other hand, Mahāyāna Buddhism is regarded as a religion because it follows the Brāhmaṇical conception of a supreme Creator-God, and the *Guṇakāraṇḍavyūha*⁷ speaks of a supreme primordial Buddha-god (Ādi-Buddha or Ādinātha). He is infinite, omniscient and self-existing (*svayambhū*) and the creator of the universe. He is without beginning and without end. The *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*⁸ says that the Buddha 'has lived since countless aeons in the past, and will live for ever'. In the same work,⁹ he says of himself, "I am the father of the world." He is mentioned here as the physician and protector of all creatures.

The Ādi-Buddha was produced from the mystic syllable *aum*¹⁰ which was manifested in the perfect void (*mahāsūnyatā*). At the creation of the world, there was a lotus-flower on which the Ādi-Buddha revealed himself in the form of a flame. This reminds us of the Brāhmaṇical conception of Brahman, the creator-god, who sits on a lotus-flower produced from the navel of Viṣṇu. Ādi-Buddha never descended on earth. He left the creation of the world and direction of its affairs to the

5 *JAIH*, Vol. III, p. 108.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 109, note 11 ; see also below.

7 Alice Getty, *GNB*, p. 2.

8 See M. Winternitz, *HIL*, Vol. II, pp. 295-96.

9 See Chapter XV, Gāthā 21 ; Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

10 Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 2 and note 5.

active author of creation, the Dhyāni-Bodddhisattva. Padmapāṇi (the Lotus-bearer Dhyāni-Bodddhisattva),¹¹ a non-Tantric form of Avalokiteśvara,¹² received from the Ādi-Buddha, through the medium of his spiritual father Amitābha (the Dhyāni-Buddha),¹³ the active power of creation and created the actual world.¹⁴ The *Kāraṇḍavyūha*¹⁵ says that Avalokiteśvara created gods out of his own body. The Sun (Āditya) and the Moon (Candra) came from his eyes, Maheśvara from his brow, Brahman and other gods from his shoulders, Nārāyaṇa from his heart, Sarasvatī from his feet, and Varuṇa from his belly.

In connection with the Buddha's supremacy in Mahāyāna, we have to see the position and power held by the Bodddhisattva Avalokiteśvara because he is an active representative of the Ādi-Buddha. The *Saddharmapuṇḍarika*¹⁶ says that the Bodddhisattva Avalokiteśvara protects his devotees from every danger. At the uttering of his name, all fetters are loosened.¹⁷ If a man falls into a mass of fire, he is saved by remembering Avalokiteśvara. In the same way, one is protected from the current of rivers; the shipwrecked and the caravan attacked by robbers are rescued. Being sentenced to death, if a person prays to Avalokiteśvara, the executioner's sword is broken into fragments. In case the whole triple chiliocosm is teemed with goblins and giants, they would lose the faculty of sight in their wicked designs by the strength of Avalokiteśvara's name. He is worshipped by women for getting a son or a beautiful daughter. By adoring him one is freed from passion, hatred, infatuation and anxiety. If a person falls into the dreadful ocean, the abode of Nāgas, marine monsters, and demons, he is saved by uttering the name of Avalokiteśvara. The devotees of Avalokite-

11 *Ibid.*, p. 58.

12 *Loc. cit.*

13 *Loc. cit.*

14 *Loc. cit.*

15 Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 308 ; P. L. Vaidya, *Mahāyānasūtrasaṃgraha*, Pt. I, p. 285.

16 Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 303.

17 *Loc. cit.*

śvara are saved by thinking his name, even if they are hurled down from the brink of the Meru, or are surrounded by a host of enemies with swords, goblins, Nāgas, demons, ghosts or giants, fearful beasts with sharp teeth and claws, malicious and frightful snakes, and if rocks of thunderstone and thunderbolts are thrown at their heads. Avalokiteśvara is present everywhere if implored in need and danger.¹⁸ In quarrels, disputes, wars and battles, one can subdue the foes by uttering his name. He is a protector, a refuge, a recourse in death, disaster and calamity. Avalokiteśvara rescues the beings who are in hell. The *Kāraṇḍavyūha*¹⁹ describes him as 'a lamp for the blind, a sunshade for those who are dying of thirst'. He is a physician to those who are tormented by sickness, and a father and a mother to the unfortunate; he points out the way to Nirvāṇa to those who have descended into hell. He is invoked with the uttering of *Om maṇipadme hum*, the 'knowledge of the six syllables', i.e., the protecting and benedictory prayer. According to Winternitz,²⁰ it is probably a mode of addressing Maṇipadmā, the female counterpart of Avalokiteśvara. The Boddhisattva says, "Whoever will give me the great knowledge of the six syllables, to that man I will willingly give the four continents, filled with the seven kinds of precious stones."²¹

As Avalokiteśvara's father Amitābha is a spiritual son of the Ādi-Buddha, his position and power is also to be stated here to understand the Buddha's supremacy in later Buddhism. The longer *Sukhāvatīvyūha*²² says that those who have done good deeds, who direct their thoughts to enlightenment and think of Amitābha and his Buddhaland in the hour of death reach the Sukhāvatī heaven. According to the shorter *Sukhāvatīvyūha*,²³ Sukhāvatī is not the reward for good deeds; but one who merely hears the name of Amitābha and thinks of it will go to heaven.

18 SBE, Vol. XXI, p. 407, note 2.

19 Winternitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 308-09.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 309.

21 *Loc. cit.*

22 *Ibid.*, pp. 310-11.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 310.

The conception of the Buddha's supremacy is not new in later Buddhist mythology since it is already found in early Buddhist mythology. Although the Buddha based his teachings upon reason, the Pali works dealing with the ethical doctrines of early Buddhism represent him as omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. In the same way, in the *Mahāyānasūtras*, the Buddha, according to Winternitz,²⁴ already appears as a demigod in the commentary on the *Brahmajāla Sutta*. When he starts begging for alms, soft wind sweeps the path before him, clouds pour down a light shower of rain for clearing the dust and then stay upon his head like a canopy, high and low places become even, and lotus flowers spring fourth under his footsteps, and so on. In the *Dīghanikāya*,²⁵ the Buddha says that he, whose faith in the Tathāgata is settled, cannot be dragged down by the recluse, Brāhmaṇa, Deva, Māra and Brahmā. The *Saṃyuttanikāya*²⁶ says that those who take refuge unto the Buddha's feet are released from danger. The gods Candimā and Suriya, being seized by the Asura Rāhu, took refuge in the Buddha and uttered the verse—

*namo te Buddha vīr—atthu vip̐pamutto si sabbadhi/
sambādha-paṭip̐panno=’smi tassa me saraṇaṃ bhava ti||*

“Adoration to thee, great Buddha! Thou art free from all impurities. I am distressed. Become thou a refuge to me.” Then the Buddha addressed Rāhu as follows—

*Tathāgatam=arahantaṃ Candimā saraṇaṃ gato!
Rāhu Candam̐ pamuñcassu Buddhā lok-ānukampakā ti||*

“In the Arahant Tathāgato, the Moon-god, has taken refuge. Rāhu, release thou the Moon. The Buddhas are merciful to the world.” At this the Asura Rāhu released the Moon-god, went to the place of the Asura chief, Vepacitti, and stood in great terror on one side. When the Asura chief wanted to know the cause of his terror, Rāhu replied—

*Sattadhā me phale muddhā jīvanto na sukhaṃ labhe/
Buddhagāth-ābhihito=’mhi no ce muñceyya Candiman=ti||*

24 *Ibid.*, p. 197.

25 PTS, Vol. III, p. 84.

26 See PTS, Vol. I, pp. 50-51; cf. Keith and Carnoy, *Mythology of All Races*, Vol. VI, p. 192.

“If I do not release the moon, my head would be split up into seven pieces ; and were I to live, I would have no enjoyment...” This fact shows that the Buddha is not only a preacher of the Truth, but is also a supreme authority controlling the universe, and protects the good from danger.

According to the *Dīghanikāya*,²⁷ the Buddha is above all gods and Brahmās. He is supreme and controls the universe.²⁸ In conformity with this, both the Pali²⁹ and Sanskrit³⁰ Buddhist texts state that the Buddha was visited by the gods, Brahmās, Nāgas, Yakkhas, Gandhabbas, Kinnaras, Garuḍas and Asuras in order to listen to the preaching of the *Mahāsamaya* and *Lotus Sūtras*.

According to the Buddhists, the Buddha is found everywhere. He can travel throughout the universe. Once he reached the Tāvātimsa-heaven in three strides for preaching *Abhidhamma* to the gods. The *Brahmanimantanika Sutta* of the *Majjhimanikāya* states that he went to the Brahmaloḥa for refuting the false views held by Baka, the great Brahmā, that the Brahmaloḥa was permanent. Besides, he walked long distances in the air for alms.

The Pali texts describe the Buddha as ‘world-knower’ (*loka-vidū*)³¹ who knows everything by his supernatural insight.³² He sees everything by means of the radiance of his body. In connection with these characteristics, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*³³ says that the Buddha is all-knowing and all-seeing. Besides, in

27 PTS, Vol. I, pp. 211-23.

28 *Itivuttaka*, PTS, p. 15.

29 *Dīgha.*, Vol. II, pp. 253-62.

30 *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, Chap. I.

31 T. O. Ling, *Buddhism and Mythology of Evils*, p. 116. In the *Ariya-pariyesanā Sutta* of the *Majjhima.*, PTS, Vol. I, p. 171 (Dutt, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76), the Buddha says that he is all-conqueror, omniscient, perfect, etc. (*sabbābhibhū sabbavidū haṃ=asmi/ sabbesu dhamesu auupalitto/ ahaṃ hi arahā loka ahaṃ Satthā anuttaro/ eko=‘mhi Sammāsambuddho sītibhūto=’smi nibbuto/*)

32 Ling, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

33 Chap. V.

the *Dīghanikāya*,³⁴ the Buddha himself announces his supremacy over the world by roaring the 'lion's roar'. He finds no one equal to him in the world.

Pali literature describes the Buddha as the embodiment of knowledge. According to the *Buddhavaṃsa Commentary*,^{34a} the Buddha appears on earth when knowledge is necessary for human and divine life.^{34b} He is not born in the early period of a *kappa* when people live longer than one hundred thousand years because, during this period, they are not able to recognise the nature of old age and death, and therefore are not benefited by his preaching. He is born on earth when men live not less than one hundred years and not more than ten thousand. As the Buddha appears in a suitable age for our welfare, he may be regarded as an *avatāra* of the Supreme God (*Bhagavat*).

The Buddha is supreme and *lokottara* because he says himself in the *Aṅguttaranikāya*,^{34c} that he is not a Deva, Gandhabba, Yakkha or man; he is the Buddha. This brings us to draw a conclusion that the Mahāyānists were not the first to regard the Buddha as *lokottara*; they borrowed the conception from the Hīnayānists.

However, on a careful observation of the Buddha's characteristics mentioned in the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna texts, one may say that the Buddha's supremacy of early days makes the Ādi-Buddha the creator-god in the later period. Likewise, Lakkhī of early mythology, the symbol of the earned merit to

34 See Vol. II, p. 15 (*aggo*='ham=*asmi lokassa*, *jettho*='ham=*asmi lokassa*, *seṭṭho*='ham=*asmi lokassa*, *ayam*=*antimā jāti*, *natthi dāni punabbhavo*). Cf. *sadevakassa lokassa Buddhō aggo pavuccati* (*Saṃyutta*., Vol., I, p. 67).

34a See pp. 158f. ; Malalasekera, *DPPN*, Vol. II, p. 298.

34b This reminds us of Kṛṣṇa, whom Brāhmaṇical literature calls an *avatāra* of the Supreme God, as saying : "When righteousness disappears and unrighteousness appears, I come on earth to reestablish righteousness by punishing the wicked and protecting the good" (*Gītā*, IV. 7-8).

34c Vol. II, p. 38 ; Kern, *MIB*, p. 64.

the way to *nibbāna*, tends to become the female principle of the Ādi-Buddha in later Buddhism.^{34d}

Light from the Buddha's Body. The Hīnayāna literature³⁵ states that all the *cakkavāḷas* are illuminated by the rays of light from the Buddha's body. According to the *Milindapañha*³⁶ and *Visuddhimagga*,³⁷ after performing the twin-miracle (*yamakapāṭihāriya*) in the Tāvātimsa, when the Buddha came to the world of men, he looked at the eastern, western, northern and southern world. As a result, many thousands of world systems (*anekāni cakkavāḷa-sahassāni*) appeared. On that day, the Buddha saw as far below as Avīci and as far above as the Akaniṭṭha abode.³⁸ And all the inhabitants saw one another face to face (*sabbe sammukhā va aññamaññaṃ passantī*). On another occasion, when the Bodhisattva fell from the Tusita heaven and entered the womb of queen Māyā, a light appeared illuminating the Deva, Brahmā and human worlds, etc. The light was so brilliant that the beings of one world could see those of another.

The Mahāyāna Buddhist mythology was not free from this miraculous conception of Buddha's light. The *Śatasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā*³⁹ says that, when the Buddha, after meditation, glanced over the Buddha-land with his heavenly eyes, radiant light came out from his body and from every pore in his skin, and illuminated all the continents. Seeing this radiance, all

34d Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 3. In Hīnayāna mythology, Lakṣmī, the goddess of beauty and fortune, possesses wisdom and is a goddess of wisdom, etc., of Brāhmaṇical literature. She is also regarded as the Supreme Goddess because her favour, i.e. 'the earned merit', enables one to get *nibbāna*, the supreme knowledge (see Haldar in *Foreigners in Ancient India and Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī in Art and Literature*, ed. Sircar, pp. 143-45). According to the later Buddhists, the consort of the Ādi-Buddha is Ādi-Dharma (Ādi-Prajñā). In Nepal and Tibet, Ādi-Buddha is called Yogāmbara and his Śakti is Jñāneśvarī (Getty, *loc. cit.*).

35 *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. I, p. 47 ; *Majjhima.*, Vol. III, p. 120.

36 *SBE*, Vol. XXXVI, p. 220.

37 *PTS*, p. 392.

38 See below. They are the highest and lowest of the material worlds.

39 Cf. Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

beings became clear-sighted and were all confirmed in the unsurpassable, complete enlightenment. At his smile, innumerable rays of light emanated from his tongue.⁴⁰ "On each ray there arose lotuses of jewels, shimmering like gold, with a thousand petals, brightly hued, and beautiful to look upon, sweet, golden, with a pleasant scent, delicate and soft." The Tathāgatas sat on these lotuses and preached the doctrine of the six perfections. All beings heard this doctrine and were confirmed in the unsurpassable, complete enlightenment. The *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*⁴¹ says that when the Buddha sat in meditation, rays of light burst forth from the hair between his eyebrows and illuminated eighteen hundred thousand Buddha-lands down to the great hell Avīci and up to the limit of existence. According to the longer *Sukhāvatīvyūha*, the Buddha Amitābha radiates immeasurable light in the Sukhāvatī-world.⁴²

Mahāpurisalakkhaṇā and the Buddha. The thirty two marks of a great man attributed to the Buddha are found in both the earlier and later systems of Buddhism. In the *Dīghanikāya*,⁴³ the Buddha is described as flat-footed ; he does not toe or heal the ground in walking. On the soles of his feet appear signs of wheel with tyre and hub. He has long fingers and toes. His hands and feet are soft and look like a net. His ankles are

40 *Loc. cit.*

41 Chapter I.

42 In the said world, there is neither hell nor animals, Pretas and Asuras. It is filled with sweet scent. Jewel trees of different colours grow there and wonderful lotuses blossom. The country is flat without hills. Rivers of this land yield sweet water. Those who are born here are all endowed with the most beautiful qualities, physical and mental, and enjoy all imaginable pleasures. Men and gods are equal in position. There is no question of day and night. It is devoid of darkness. As stated above, anyone who thinks of Amitābha, pays heed to his good deeds and directs his thoughts to enlightenment is reborn in the Sukhāvatī world. Merely a thought of Amitābha enables one to be reborn in Sukhāvatī. Its inhabitants are not born of women ; they appear seated on lotuses and live in happiness and calm, in perfect wisdom and sinlessness.

43 See Vol. II, pp. 17-19 ; cf. *Majjhima.*, Vol. II, pp. 136f. ; Senart, *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, pp. 226-27 ; *Saddharma.*, Chap. III ; *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, Chap. XIII ; Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 323.

like rounded shells and his legs are like an antelope's. He can touch and rub his knees with either hand standing and without bending. His male organ is concealed in a sheath. His complexion is like bronze or gold. His skin is so delicately smooth that no dust sticks to his body. The small hairs on his body turn upward; they are blue-black like eye-paint, and are curling to the right. The front part of his body is like a lion's. There is no furrow between his shoulders. The height of his body is equal to the compass of his arms. His bust is rounded. His taste is supremely acute. He has forty teeth and his jaw is as a lion's. His tongue is very long. He has a divine voice like that of the Karavika bird. His eyelashes are like those of a cow. A hairy mole appears between his eyebrows, which is white and soft like cotton. His head is like a royal turban.

The Brāhmaṇical literature applied the designation Mahāpuruṣa to Nārāyaṇa, and the *Lalitavistara* identifies Nārāyaṇa with the Buddha.⁴⁴ This suggests that the Buddha's supremacy is borrowed from Hindu mythology.

Bodhisattva. The similarity between early and later mythology is found in the conception of the Bodhisattvas. Every Bodhisattva descends from the Tusita to earth. He enters into the body of his mother, Māyā, by the right side without causing her any pain; ten months later, he reappears from his mother's body. His birth is honoured by Brahmā, Indra and the other Brāhmaṇical divinities.⁴⁵

Cosmology. The cosmology of the Mahāyāna Buddhists is more or less the same as that of Hīnayāna mythology with a little difference. In all periods, the Buddhists speak of the universe as consisting of innumerable world-systems.⁴⁶ Accord-

44 Keith and Carnoy, *op. cit.*, p. 196; *Lalitavistara*, ed. Vaidya, p. 77, etc.

45 Getty, *op. cit.*, p. xviii; Winternitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 240, 249.

46 Cf. *Visuddhimagga*, p. 207; *Vinaya. Comm.*, PTS, Vol. I, p. 120; *Sutta. Comm.*, PTS, Vol. II, p. 443; *SBE*, Vol. XXI, p. 232; *Abhidharma-kośa*, Chap. III. According to some scholars, the *Abhidharma* is an authority of all schools of Buddhism, though it is written from the standpoint of the Sarvāstivāda school of Hīnayāna (Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 357).

ing to Pali works,⁴⁷ the *cakkavālas* are scattered throughout the infinite space, being arranged in groups of three, touching each other, causing a dark region called Lokantarika hell⁴⁸ in the traingular space surrounded by three *cakkavālas*. Sanskrit Buddhist literature⁴⁹ speaks with a little difference in respect of the Lokantarika hells which are said to be situated in all the *cakkavālas* and not in the traingular space. However, the *cakkavālas* are grouped in different universes. The early Hīnayāna,⁵⁰ later Hīnayāna⁵¹ and Mahāyāna⁵² mythology mentions three sorts of universes—(1) *sahasī cūlanikā* (Sans. *sāhasracūḍika*) *lokadhātu*⁵³—a small kind of universe consisting of 1,000 *cakkavālas*; (2) *dvisahasī majjhimikā* (*dvisāhasramadhyama*) *lokadhātu*⁵⁴—a middle class universe consisting of 1,000,000 *cakkavālas*; and (3) *tisahasī mahāsahasī* (*trisāhasramahāsāhasra*) *lokadhātu*⁵⁵—a large type of universe consisting of

47 *Dīgha.*, Vol. II, p. 12; *Majjhima.*, Vol. III, p. 120; *Āṅguttara.*, Vol. II, p. 130; *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. V, p. 454; *Kindred Sayings*, PTS, Vol. V, p. 382; *Vinaya. Comm.*, loc. cit., *Sutta. Comm.*, loc. cit.; *Visuddhi.*, loc. cit.

48 This reminds us of the *anārambhaṇaṃ tamas*, 'unsupported darkness', of the *Rgveda* (*Ency. Rel. Eth.*, Vol. IV, p. 132).

49 *Mahāvastu*, ed. Senart, Vol. I, pp. 41, 229, 240; Vol. II, p. 162; Vol. III, pp. 334, 341; *Dīvyāvadāna*, ed. Cowell and Neil, pp. 204-06; *Lalita.*, ed. Lefmann, pp. 51, 410; *Saddharma.*, ed. Kern and Nanjio, p. 163; *Samādhirāja.*, ed. Régamay, p. 7, line 9; *Śatasāhasrikā.*, ed. P. Ghosa, p. 102; Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 250; *Ency. Rel. Eth.*, loc. cit.

50 *Āṅguttara.*, Vol. I, p. 228; Rhys Davids, *Gradual Sayings*, Vol. I, p. 207. Cf. McGovern, *A Manual of Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 48; *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 8.

51 E.g. *Abhidharma.*, Chap. III.

52 *Mahāvastu*, 3042-44; *Bodhicaryāvatārapañjikā*, II. 14 (*Ency. Rel. Eth.*, Vol. IV, p. 137a, note 7).

53 *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā*, ed. Mitra, pp. 65-66; E. Waldschmidt, *Das Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, 31.46.

54 *Daśabhūmika*. (Gāthā portion), ed. Rahder, p. 46; *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, p. 95; *Śatasāhasrikā.*, p. 26.

55 *Mahāvastu*, Vol. II, pp. 300; *Lalita.*, pp. 276, 319, 377; *Saddharma.*, pp. 121-23, 156-57, 263-64, 440; *Ārya-Maṇjuśrīmūlakalpa*, ed. Gaṇapati Sastri, p. 343; *Suvarṇabhāṣottama.*, ed. Nobel, pp. 8, 86, 100, 149; *Samādhirāja.*, p. 8; *Rāṣṭrapālāparipreccā*, ed. Finot, p. 2.; *Aṣṭasāhasrikā.*, pp. 67-69, 73, 95, 115, 118, 120, 123, 129, 130, 132, 141; *Mahā-*

1,000,000,000 *cakkavalas*. According to Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist texts, each *cakkavāla*⁵⁶ or small universe is made of five great elements⁵⁷—the earth, water, air, fire and ether or space, the first four being the substance of all material things. In conformity with the Pali works,⁵⁸ the *Abhidharmakośa*⁵⁹ and *Kāraṇḍavyūha*⁶⁰ state that the earth rests upon water.

In respect of the mountain system, though there is some variation regarding the order of mountains in the different texts, Hīnayāna mythology is interconnected for the following: (a) Mount Sineru or Sumeru is in the centre of each *cakkavāla*⁶¹; (b) it is also called Meru, Mahāmeru, etc.;⁶² (c) its height is 1,68,000 *yojanas*, half of which is submerged in the sea;⁶³ (d) it is surrounded by seven rocky circles—Yugandhara, Īsadhara (Īṣādhara), Karavika (Khadiraka), Sudassana, Nemindhara (Nimindhara), Vinataka and Assakaṇṇa,⁶⁴ each being half the height of the preceding one,

yānasūtrasaṅgraha, Pt. I, pp. 79, 85, 87-88; *Daśabhūmika*. (Gāthā portion), pp. 46, 55; *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, ed. Bendall, pp. 246-47.

56 *Anguttara*., Vol. I, p. 176; *JPTS*, 1891-93, pp. 123-24; 1884, p. 27; cf. *Mahāvastu*, Vol. II, p. 341; *Saddharma*., p. 316.

57 E.g., *Anguttara*., *loc. cit.*; *Abhidharma*., Chap. III; cf. *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, p. 244; *Ency. Rel. Eth.*, Vol. IV, p. 131.

58 *Dīgha*., Vol. II, p. 107; *Anguttara*., Vol. IV, p. 312; *Milinda*., PTS, p. 68 (*mahāpaṭhavī udake paṭiṣṭhitā, udakam vāte paṭiṣṭhitam, vāto ākāsajṇho hoti*); cf. *Jātaka*, PTS, Vol. III, p. 42; *Vinaya. Comm.*, Vol. I, p. 119; *Sutta. Comm.*, Vol. II, p. 442; *Visuddhi*., pp. 205-06; *Dhammasaṅgaṇi Comm.*, PTS, pp. 297-98; Spence Hardy, *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 3; cf. D. J. Gogerly, *Ceylon Buddhism*, Vol. I, pp. 19, 21; *Ency. Rel. Eth.*, *loc. cit.*; Hardy, *Legends and Theories of the Buddhists*, pp. 85-86; McGovern, *op. cit.*, p. 50).

59 Chap. III.

60 Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

61 E.g., *Anguttara*., Vol. I, p. 227; Vol. V, p. 59; *Abhidharma*., *loc. cit.*

62 E.g., *Cūlavamsa*, PTS, Ch. 42, verse 2; Ch. 37, verse 79; *Majjhima*., Vol. I, p. 338; P. L. Vaidya, *Samādhirāja*., p. 1.

63 *Sutta. Comm.*, Vol. II, p. 443; *Vinaya. Comm.*, Vol. I, p. 119; *Visuddhi*., p. 206; *Dhammasaṅgaṇi Comm.*, p. 298; *Anguttara*., Vol. IV, p. 100; *Mahāyānasūtrasaṅgraha*, Pt. I, p. 272.

64 W. Kirfel, *Die Kosmographie der Inder*, p. 186; *Abhidharma*., *loc.*

commencing from the Sineru ; (e) there is an ocean flowing between every two mountains;⁶⁵ (f) the four great island-continent⁶⁶ are situated between the last of the seven rocky circles and the *cakkavāḷa*-mountain or *cakkavāḷa-silā*.

Both Hinayāna and Mahāyāna texts state that, in each *cakkavāḷa*, there is a Sun and Moon and a multitude of stars.⁶⁷ The commentary on the *Aggañña Sutta*⁶⁸ and the *Abhidharma-kośa*,⁶⁹ state that, at the same time, sunrise, sunset, midday and midnight occur respectively in the four continents. For example, when the sun rises in Apargoyāna, it is midday in Jambudīpa, evening in Pubbavideha, and midnight in Uttarakuru.

Destruction and Renovation of the Universe. The Pali texts of the early Hinayāna,⁷⁰ the *Abhidharmakośa*⁷¹ and *Mahāvastu*⁷² of the later Hinayāna and many other Sanskrit Buddhist texts⁷³ of the Mahāyāna mythology carry the same

cit. ; *Dharmasaṅgraha*, Sec. 125 ; *Ency. Rel. Eth.*, Vol. IV, p. 132 ; *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 4140-48.

65 *Jātaka*, Vol. I, p. 64 ; Vol. IV, p. 125 ; Vol. VI, p. 43 ; *Legends and Theories of the Buddhists*, pp. 84-85 ; *Abhidharma*, *loc. cit.*

66 They are Jambudīpa to the south, Aparagoyāna to the west, Pubbavideha to the east and Uttarakuru to the north of the Mahāmeru. The earth consists of these four continents. It is similar to the Purāṇic conception of the four-continent earth (*caturdvīpā vasumatī*). See *Vinaya. Comm.*, Vol. I, pp. 119-20 ; *Suttanipāta Comm.*, Vol. II, p. 443 ; *Visuddhi*, p. 207 ; *Abhidharma*, *loc. cit.* ; *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 3045, 3047, 3050, 3054, 3057 ; *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* (*Gilgit Manuscripts*), ed. N. Dutt, Vol. I, p. 94 ; *Dharmasaṅgraha*, Sec. 120 ; *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, p. 95.

67 *Aṅguttara*, Vol. I, p. 227 ; Vol. V, p. 69 ; *Abhidharma*, *loc. cit.* ; *Lalita*, p. 75. The number of stars is 28 according to the *Mahāniddeśa*, Vol. II, p. 382, and *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 3186-214 ; but Hardy mentions 27 stars (*Manual of Buddhism*, pp. 23-24).

68 *Dīgha. Comm.*, Vol. III, pp. 866 ff.

69 Chap. III.

70 *Dīgha. Comm.*, Vol. III, pp. 84 ; cf. *Visuddhi*, p. 414 ; *Manual of Buddhism*, pp. 28.

71 Chap. III.

72 *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, pp. 63, 229, 268 ; Vol. II, pp. 133, 284.

73 *Lalita*, p. 345 ; *Gaṇḍavyūha*, ed. Suzuki and Idzumi, p. 277 ;

view regarding the destruction and renovation of the universe. According to these texts,⁷⁴ the universe undergoes many cycles of dissolution and evolution.

The *Visuddhimagga*,⁷⁵ *Mahāvyutpatti*⁷⁶ and *Daśabhūmika Sūtra*⁷⁷ state that the world is destroyed by fire,⁷⁸ water and wind. When the world is destroyed by fire, seven suns appear in the sky⁷⁹ and all living beings of earth are reborn in the Ābhassara Brahma-world whence they come again on earth during the period of evolution of the universe.⁸⁰

The *Abhidharmakośa*⁸¹ and *Visuddhimagga*⁸² state that the world is destroyed by fire seven times and the next by water. In this procedure for the eighth time, it is destroyed seven times by water, and seven times again by fire. 'By so

Mahāvyutpatti, 8279-80; *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, ed. Wogihara, 253.14; Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, Vol. II, s. v. *vivarta*.

74 *Loc. cit.*

75 See p. 414.

76 *Mahāvyutpatti*, 8285-87.

77 See 91.27; Edgerton, *op. cit.*, s. v. *saṁvartanī*. Cf. *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, p. 246.

78 Cf. *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, p. 180.

79 *Anguttara*, Vol. IV, pp. 100-03; *Visuddhi*, pp. 414-15; *Abhidharma*, Chap. III. In the same manner as the *Visuddhi*, the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, p. 247, says that, when the destruction begins, the second sun appears and dries up the small streams; the third and fourth suns dry up, respectively, great rivers and great seas.

80 *Anguttara*, Vol. V, p. 60; *Dīgha*, Vol. III, pp. 84-85; *Manual of Buddhism*, pp. 28, 30-31; *Visuddhi*, pp. 415-20; *Abhidharma*, *loc. cit.*; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, pp. 52, 63, 338. In the same way as the Pali texts (*Dīgha*, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-96; *Visuddhi*, pp. 417-20), the *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, pp. 338-48, describes how the universe renovates itself after a period of dissolution (cf. *Abhidharma*, Chap. III). The *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, p. 247, has also some connection with the renovation theory of early and later Buddhist mythology and says that, at the beginning of the recreation of the universe, the universe of 1,000,000,000 *cakravālas* are covered with clouds which pour down a sea of water.

81 See Chap. III.

82 See pp. 421-22.

much are passed sixty-three cycles. Within this limit, although the turn to perish by water is arrived, it is inhibited, and the wind which takes its turn destroys the world, crushing the Subhakiṇha whose term of life is full sixty-four cycles.^{82a}

Both the early and later Hīnyāna have the same opinion about the definition of a Mahākappa (great cycle). When the world is under destruction by fire, water and wind, there is in each case a great cycle made of four aeons.⁸³ The first aeon, from the great world-destroying rain to the cessation of the flames, is called dissolution (*saṁvatta*). The second, from the cessation of the world-destroying flames to the great rain flooding up the world-system, is called the process of dissolution (*saṁvattaṭṭhāyī*). The third aeon, from the great world-flooding rain till the appearance of the sun and moon, is called evolution (*vivatta*). The fourth, from the appearance of the sun and moon to the great world-destroying rains, is called the process of evolution (*vivattaṭṭhāyī*).⁸⁴

Abodes of Living Beings. The abodes of living beings described in later Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna mythology are almost the same as that of early Hīnayāna. Early Hīnayāna speaks of 31 abodes of living beings in each *cakkavāla* while the later Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna mention respectively 32 and 33 abodes. But the mythology of all periods state that these abodes are scattered below, upon and above Mount Sineru. They are situated one above another according to the merits and demerits of the inhabitants, commencing from the hell, the lowest place, and divided into four groups—(1) abodes of misery (unfortunate sense-experience), (2) abodes of fortunate sense-experience, (3) the *Rūpaloka* and (4) *Arūpaloka*. Among these, the first group is fourfold—(1) purgatory, (2) animal kingdom, (3) Peta-world and (4) Asura-world.⁸⁵ The second

82a *Path of Purity*, PTS, Vol. II, p. 488.

83 *Kindred Sayings*, PTS, Vol. II, p. 123 ; *Abhidharma.*, Chap. III ; cf. *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, p. 63.

84 *Anguttara.*, Vol. II, p. 142 ; *Visuddhi.*, p. 414.

85 *Petavatthu*, PTS, p. 66 ; *Anguttara.*, Vol. I, p. 37 ; Vol. V, pp. 269-70, etc.

group is sevenfold and consists of one realm for human beings and the other six for gods.

As the first two groups of abodes belong to the sense experience, they are taken together as eleven and grouped as the abodes of *Kāmaloka*. Thus it is said that the abodes of living beings generally belong to the three groups—(1) *Kāmaloka* (world of sense-experience), (2) *Rūpaloka* (material world) and (3) *Arūpaloka* (immaterial world). Of the 11 *Kāmalokas*, the following six are *Devalokas*—(1) *Cātummahārājika* (Sans. *Cāturmahārājika*), (2) *Tāvatiṃsa* (Trayastrimśa), (3) *Tusita* (Tuṣita), (4) *Yāma*, (5) *Nimmānarati* (Nirmānarati), and (6) *Paranimmitavasavatti* (Paranirmitavaśavartī).⁸⁶ The last two groups are devoid of sense-desires. According to the Pali texts, *Rūpaloka*⁸⁷ and *Arūpoka*⁸⁸ consist of sixteen and four celestial abodes respectively. The *Rūpa* heavens are divided into four classes—

(A) abodes of the first *jhāna* to which belong three heavens, viz., (1) of Brahmā's retinue (*Brahmapārisajja*, Sans. *Brahmapārṣadya*), (2) of Brahmā's ministers (*Brahmapurohita*), and (3) of the great Brahmās (*Mahābrahmā*).

(B) abodes of the second *jhāna* to which belong the next three heavens—(4) of minor lustre (*Parittābha*, *Parittābha*), (5) of infinite lustre (*Appamāṇābha*, *Apramāṇābha*), and (6) of the radiant gods (*Ābhassara*, *Ābhāsvara*).

(C) abodes of the third *jhāna* to which belong another three heavens, namely, (7) of minor beauty (*Parittasubha*), (8) of

86 *Dīgha.*, Vol. I, pp. 215-23; *Majjhima.*, Vol. I, p. 289; Vol. III, pp. 100-03, 147; *Aṅguttara.*, Vol. I, pp. 210, 227-28; Vol. III, p. 287; Vol. IV, pp. 119, 240ff.; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, p. 212; Vol. II, p. 16; Vol. III, pp. 223, 319; *Dīvyāvadāna*, pp. 68, 140, 367; *Avadānaśataka*, ed. Speyer, Vol. I, p. 5; *Lalita.*, pp. 364, 366, 396, 401, 441; *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 3078-83; *Dharmasaṅgraha*, ed. Müller, Sec. 127.

87 E.g., *Majjhima.*, Vol. I, p. 289; cf. *Lalita.*, pp. 30, 99, 219, 250, 413; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, p. 159; *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 3085-3108; *Dharmasaṅgraha*, Sec. 128.

88 *Majjhima.*, loc. cit.; cf. *Dharmasaṅgraha*, Sec. 129; *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 3110-13.

immeasurable beauty (*Appamāṇasubha*, *Apramāṇasubha*), and (9) of complete beauty (*Subhakiṇṇa*, *Śubhakṛtsna*).

(D) abodes of the fourth *jhāna*, to which belong the following seven heavens : (10) of the gods of great reward (*Vehapphala*, *Brhatphala*), (11) of the unconscious beings (*Asaññasatta*, *Asañjñasattva*), (12) of the lowest *Suddhāvāsa* beings (*Aviha*, *Avrha*, *Abṛhat*), (13) of the serene beings (*Atappa*, *Atapa*), (14) of the beautiful beings (*Sudassā*, *Sudṛśa*), (15) of the clear-sighted beings (*Sudassī*, *Sudarśana*), and (16) of the highest *rūpāvacara* beings (*Akaṇiṭṭha*, *Akaṇiṣṭha*). Of these heavens, 12 to 16 are called pure abodes (*Suddhāvāsa*).

Later Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna have a little difference with the above-mentioned *Rūpa* heavens of early Hīnayāna. The *Abhidharmakośa*⁸⁹ and *Dharmasaṅgraha*^{90a} mention, respectively, 17 and 18 *Rūpa* heavens, on account of which the total number of abodes increases to 32 and 33 in later Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna respectively.

The *Arūpaloka* is of different grades—(17) the sphere of the conception of infinite space (*Ākāśānañcāyatana*, *Ākāśānantyāyatana*) ; (18) that of infinite consciousness (*Viññāṇaṇcāyatana*, *Vijñānānantyāyatana*) ; (19) that of nothingness (*Ākiñcaṇṇāyatana*, *Ākiñcanyāyatana*) ; and (20) that of neither consciousness nor unconsciousness (*Nevaśaññānāsaññāyatana*, *Naivasamjñānāsamjñāyatana*).⁹⁰

Heaven. Mythology of all ages holds the same view in regard to heaven and hell. Heaven is the reward for good deeds and hell is the punishment for evil deeds. Buddhist literature of all periods speaks of some heavens and hells. In respect of heaven, a new outlook is found in Buddhist mythology. Both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna say that the heavens are divided into two groups of world—(1) *Devaloka* (heavens of the gods) and (2) *Brahmaloka* (heavens of the Brahmās). The *Brahmaloka* is divided into two worlds—(1) *Rūpa*-

89 Chap. III ; cf. *Ency. Rel. Eth.*, Vol. IV, p 136.

89a Sec. 128.

90 E.g., *Anguttara*., Vol. I, p. 41 ; cf. Kern, *MIB*, pp. 57-59 ; *Dharma-saṅgraha*, Sec. 129.

Brahmaloka (material world) and (2) *Arūpa-Brahmaloka* (immaterial world). The number of *Devalokas* and *Arūpa-Brahmalokas* is six and four respectively according to both systems while the number of *Rūpa-Brahmaloka* varies. It is 16 in early Hīnayāna, 17 in later Hīnayāna and 18 in Mahāyāna.

As mentioned above, the lowest heaven is the *Cātummahārājika* which stands halfway up Mount Sineru, and the next higher heaven, *Tāvatiṃsa*,^{90a} is on the top of the Sineru. In this ascending order, the other heavens stand one above another. Certain texts⁹¹ of the Mahāyāna, viz. *Lalitavistara*, *Mahāvvyutpatti*, etc., draw a difference in regard to the highest heaven of the *Rūpa*-world. These works place the heaven of Mahāmaheśvara, the Great Lord Śiva, above the Akaniṣṭha, the highest heaven of the *Rūpa*-world as mentioned in the Hīnayāna mythology.

Gods and Goddesses—Both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna state that the gods of the *Devalokas* and *Brahmalokas* are inferior to the Buddha.⁹² The Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist texts mention some important gods who rule over the gods of six *Devalokas*; but none of them is supreme. They are subject to death for which their names are regarded as offices of the kings of gods. At the death of one king, some one who acquires the qualifications of king takes the place of the deceased king. According to the said texts, the kings of the *Devalokas* are as follows—four great kings of the *Cātummahārājika*-world, namely, Dhataratṭha (Dhṛtarāṣṭra) of the east, Virūlhaka (Virūḍhaka) of the south, Virūpakkha (Virūpākṣa) of the west and Vessavaṇa

90a The *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, p. 32, *Divyāvadāna*, pp. 194-95, and *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 4194-97, follow the Pali texts (*Anguttara*., Vol. III, p. 40; *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā*, Vol. I, pp. 271-75; Vol. II, p. 266; *Jātaka*, Vol. I, p. 204; Vol. V, pp. 385-86; *Vimānavatthu Comm.*, p. 94) and state that the following four parks, namely, Pāruṣyaka (Pali *Phārusaka*), Citraratha (Cittalatāvana), Nandanavana and Miśrakāvana (Missakāvana) are in the *Tāvatiṃsa* (Trayastrimśa) heaven.

91 *Ency. Rel. Eth.*, Vol. IV, p. 136.

92 See above, notes 29 and 30; also see Vaidya, *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*., intro., pp. 7, 9, 11; *Mahāyānasūtrasaṅgraha*, Pt. I, p. 258; *Laṅkāvatāra*., trans. Suzuki, p. 216.

(Vaiśravaṇa) or Kuvera of the north; also Sakka (Śakra)⁹³ of the Tāvātimsa-world, Suyāma⁹⁴ of the Yāma-world; Santusita (Santuṣita)⁹⁵ of the Tusita-world, Sunimmita (Sunirmita)⁹⁶ of the Nimmānarati-world and Vasavattī (Vaśavartī)⁹⁷ of the Paranimmitavasavatti-world.⁹⁸ In this connection, it may be noted that the four great kings of the Cātummahārājika-world are regarded as four *lokapālas* in both early and later Buddhism.⁹⁹

The heavens mentioned above are named according to the different classes of gods who inhabit them. More or less the same classes of gods are mentioned in the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna texts.¹⁰⁰ This shows that the later Buddhists borrowed from the early Buddhist literature the conception of the classification of gods in respect of their merits earned through different stages of meditation.

93 Cf. *Gaṇḍavyūha*, p. 119.

94 *Ibid.*, p. 216.

95 *Loc. cit.*

96 *Loc. cit.*

97 *Ibid.*, p. 117.

98 *Dīgha.*, Vol. I, pp. 217-19; Vol. II, pp. 207f., 257-58; Vol. III, pp. 146, 194f.; *Aṅguttara.*, Vol. I, p. 242; Vol. IV, pp. 242-43; *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. IV, p. 280; *Buddhacarita*, Chap. XVI; *SBE*, Vol. XLIX, p. 187; *Dharmasaṅgraha*, Sec. 7; *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 3136-39, 3146-49; *Saddharma.*, pp. 46f.; *Lalita.*, pp. 217-18, 302; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. III, pp. 306-09; *Suvarṇa-bhāsottama.*, ed. Nobel, p. 64.

99 Vaidya, *Samādhirāja.*, p. 62. The *Dharmasaṅgraha* (Secs. 7-10) mentions the above four and also enumerates eight, ten and fourteen *lokapālas*. The eight *lokapālas* are—(1) Indra, (2) Yama, (3) Varuṇa, (4) Kuvera, (5) Īśāna, (6) Agni, (7) Nairṛta and (8) Vāyu (see also *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 3146-49, 3152, 3154-59). The ten *lokapālas* are—*aṣṭalokapāl-ādhikam=ūrdhve Brahmā, adhaḥ Kṛṣṇaḥ*. The fourteen *lokapālas*—*tadyathā daśa-lokapāla-sakalam, candra, sūrya, pṛthvī and asura*.

100 *Majjhima.*, Vol. III, pp. 100 ff.; *Kathāvatthu*, PTS, 207, 208; *Abhidhammatthasaṅgāha*, 21; *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 3075ff.; *Dharmasaṅgraha*, Sec. 127ff.; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. II, pp. 314, 358; *Lalita.*, p. 150; *Avadāna.*, Vol. I, p. 5; *Dīvyāvadāna*, pp. 68, 138, 167, 568; *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, ed. Wogihara, p. 61; *Gaṇḍavyūha*, p. 249; Edgerton, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 270. In this connection, it may be noted that Susīma-devaputta of the *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. I, p. 217, is mentioned in the *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 3136.

The Vedic tradition of personification and deification of natural phenomena is recognised in both the Pali and the Sanskrit Buddhist literature. The *Samyuttanikāya*,¹⁰¹ *Lalitavistara*,¹⁰² *Divyāvadāna*¹⁰³ and *Mūlasarvāstivādinaya*¹⁰⁴ are unanimous regarding the following two groups of *Valāhakāyika* gods, namely, (1) *Vassavalāhaka* and (2) *Vātavalāhaka* who are related to rains and wind respectively. The *Dīghanikāya*¹⁰⁵ and *Mahāsamāja Sūtra*¹⁰⁶ refer to some fragile cloud-spirits called *Mandavalāhaka*. Besides, the gods of the earth, air, fire, water, and the Sun and Moon, mentioned in the *Mahāsamaya Sutta*,¹⁰⁷ are found in later Buddhist mythology.¹⁰⁸

As mentioned above, both the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna borrowed some Hindu gods. The following names of Hindu gods are common in Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist texts—(1) Śakra (Sakka),¹⁰⁹ (2) Indra (Inda),¹¹⁰ (3) Viśvakarman (Vissakamma),¹¹¹ (4) Varuṇa,¹¹² (5) Prajāpati (Pajāpati),¹¹³

101 Vol. III, pp. 254ff. Cf. *Milinda.*, PTS, p. 191 (*Ghanikā*, cloud-spirits).

102 See p. 273. The *Mahāvastu*, Vol. III, p. 324, mentions only the *Varṣavalāhaka* gods.

103 See p. 127.

104 Vol. I, p. 243.

105 Vol. II, p. 259.

106 Waldschmidt, *Kleinere Sanskrit Texts*, 4, 185.2 (see note 3).

107 *Dīgha.*, Vol. II, pp. 253-62.

108 Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 125 ; *Mahāyānasūtra.*, Pt. I, pp. 258, 285.

109 See above, notes 93 and 98 ; also see Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

110 *Dīgha.*, Vol. I, p. 244. Inda is mentioned here with Soma, Varuṇa, Isāna, Pajāpati, Brahmā, Mahiddi and Yama as a god whom the Brāhmaṇas invoke and pray to, for union with Brahman after death. Also see *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 274 ; *Sutta.*, verse 310. For Mahāyāna texts, see *Lalita.*, p. 62, *Mahāvyaupatti.*, 8022 ; *Saddharma-Laṅkāvatāra.*, Ch. III ; Winternitz, *loc. cit.* Isāna (Isāna), one of the chief gods of the Brāhmaṇas, is mentioned in the *Dīgha.*, Vol. I, p. 244, and *Dharmasaṅgraha.*, Sec. 8.

111 *Dīgha.*, Vol. II, p. 180 ; *Jātaka.*, Vol. IV, pp. 323, 325, 489, 499 ; Vol. V, pp. 132, 190-91 ; Vol. VI, pp. 12, 29, 72, 211, 519f. ; *Dīgha. Comm.*, Vol. III, p. 855 ; *Buddhavaṃsa Comm.*, p. 280 ; *Aṅguttara. Comm.*, Vol. I, pp. 126f. ; *Mahāvyaupatti.*, 4310 ; *Laṅkāvatāra.*, trans. Suzuki, p. 216.

112 *Samyutta.*, Vol. I, p. 219 ; *Dīgha.*, Vol. I, p. 244 ; Vol. II, p. 259 ; Vol. III, p. 204 ; *Jātaka.*, Vol. VI, pp. 500-01, 586 ; also above, note 15 ; *Śikṣāsamuccaya.*, p. 169 ; Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 334 ; Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

113 *Samyutta.*, *loc. cit.* ; *Dīgha.*, Vol. II, p. 274 ; *Majjhima.*, Vol. I, pp. 140, 327, 329 ; *Jātaka.*, Vol. V, p. 28 ; Vol. VI, pp. 568, 571 ; Winternitz, *loc. cit.*

(6) Viṣṇu (Veṇhu),¹¹⁴ (7) Nārāyaṇa,¹¹⁵ (8) Soma,¹¹⁶ (9) Skanda or Kumāra,¹¹⁷ (10) Śiva (Siva),¹¹⁸ (11) Yama,¹¹⁹ (12) Kuvera,¹²⁰ (13) Sūrya or Āditya (Suriya or Ādicca),¹²¹ (14) Candra (Candimā),¹²² (15) Vāyu,¹²³ (16) Agni (Aggi or Jātaveda)¹²⁴ and (17) Pṛthivī or Dharaṇī (Paṭhavi).¹²⁵ But, in Buddhism, these gods are treated with certain changes, particularly in conformity with the Buddhist ideas. According to the early Buddhists, these gods are inferior to the Buddha and subject to death. They follow the teachings of the Buddha

114 *Dīgha.*, Vol. II, p. 259 ; *Ārya-Mañjuśrī.*, p. 625 ; Winternitz, *loc. cit.*

115 See below, note 136.

116 *Dīgha.*, Vol. I, p. 244 ; Vol. II, p. 259 ; Vol. III, p. 204 ; Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

117 *Udāna Comm.*, p. 351 (Malalasekera, *op. cit.*, s. v.) ; *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 4761. He is regarded as a demon because he causes drought. He may be identical with his Brāhmaṇical namesake who causes diseases in children (Edgerton, *op. cit.*, s.v. *Skanda*).

118 *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. I, p. 56 ; *Samanta.*, PTS, Vol. III, p. 626 ; *Cūlavāṇsa*, Ch. 74, verse 193 ; Ch. 93, verses 9-10 ; Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

119 *Majjhima.*, Vol. III, pp. 179ff. ; *Dīgha.*, Vol. II, p. 259 ; *Dhammapada Comm.*, Vol. III, p. 337 ; *Dīgha. Comm.*, Vol. II, p. 690 ; *Aṅguttara. Comm.*, Vol. II, p. 228 ; *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 3155, 3328 ; Winternitz, *loc. cit.* ; Getty, *op. cit.*, pp. 125, 145 ; *Dharmasaṅgraha*, Sec. 8.

120 *Dīgha.*, Vol. III, p. 201 ; *Dīgha. Comm.*, Vol. III, p. 967 ; *Jātaka*, Vol. VI, p. 270 ; *Sutta. Comm.*, Vol. I, p. 369 ; *Cūlavāṇsa*, Ch. 37, verse 106 ; Ch. 39, verse 5 ; Ch. 80, verse 5 ; Ch. 87, verse 31 ; see above, note 98.

121 *Dīgha.*, Vol. III, p. 196 ; *Dīgha. Comm.*, Vol. III, p. 963 ; *Mahāyānasūtra.*, Pt. I, pp. 258, 285 ; see also above, notes 15 and 108 ; Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 125 ; *Suvarṇaprabhāsa.*, p. 89.

122 *Dīgha.*, Vol. II, p. 259 ; *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. I, p. 50 ; *Jātaka*, Vol. I, p. 172 ; Vol. IV, pp. 1, 63, 69 ; Vol. V, pp. 386, 412 ; *Suvarṇaprabhāsa.*, *loc. cit.* ; see above, notes 15 and 108 ; Getty, *loc. cit.*

123 See above, notes 15, 108.

124 *Jātaka*, Vol. I, pp. 214, 285, 494 ; Vol. III, p. 17 ; Vol. V, p. 452 ; Vol. VI, pp. 201-02, etc. The *Naṅguṭṭha Jātaka* (*ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 494-95) says that the Bodhisatta refused to worship the Fire-god because the latter has no power to protect his offerings. See also *ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 43-45 ; Getty, *loc. cit.*

125 See above, note 123 ; see also *Suvarṇaprabhāsa.*, p. 87.

and become moral and kind to the good men.¹²⁶ The *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*¹²⁷ mentions Śakra, Sūrya, Candra, Samantagandha (Vāyu), Maheśvara (Śiva) and Vaiśravaṇa (Kuvera) as the followers of the Buddha. The *Kāraṇḍavyūha*¹²⁸ says that Āditya, Candra, Maheśvara (Śiva), Nārāyaṇa, Vāyu, Dharaṇī and Varuṇa are created from the body of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. As the Ādi-Buddha appoints Avalokiteśvara as a creator-god imparting power of creation to him, the gods mentioned in the *Kāraṇḍavyūha* may be regarded as the sons of the Ādi-Buddha, for which these gods are inferior to the Buddha.

The *Saddharma-Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*¹²⁹ describes Viṣṇu, Soma, Indra and Varuṇa as some of the countless names of the Buddha. In the same text,¹³⁰ a Buddha says that he comes from the Śuddhāvāsa heaven and his father and mother are Brahmā Prajāpati and Vasumatī respectively. The goddess of earth, whether she is called Vasumatī, Pṛthivī or Dharaṇī, is common to the Brāhmaṇical, Hinayāna and Mahāyāna mythologies.

In both the early and later Buddhist texts,¹³¹ Śakra and Indra are also identical with each other, and Varuṇa, Yama, Āditya, Candra, Vāyu and Agni are personified gods of water, death, sun, moon, air and fire respectively. Śakra is always spoken of as *devānām = indra*, i.e. the Indra of gods (king of the gods). It is a common description of Śakra.¹³² But

126 *Dhammapada Comm.*, Vol. I, pp. 17f. The Jātakas contain many instances where Sakka rescued the good people in distress; cf. the cases of Dhammaddhaja, Guṭṭila, Kaccāni, Sambulā, Kusa, Mahājanaka's mother, etc.

127 See Chap. I.

128 See above, note 15.

129 See Chap. III; Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

130 See Chap. X; Winternitz, *loc. cit.*

131 *Jātaka*, Vol. III, p. 146; Vol. V, pp. 115, 409-12; Vol. VI, p. 568. See *Dīgha.*, Vol. II, p. 274, where Vāsava, i.e. Sakka, is addressed by Gopaka as Inda. Winternitz, *loc. cit.*; *Lalita.*, pp. 62, 66; *Saddharma.*, p. 69.

132 E.g., *Aṅguttara.*, Vol. III, p. 89; *Dīgha.*, Vol. I, pp. 21ff.; Vol. II, pp. 221, 275; *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. I, p. 219; *Lalita.*, *loc. cit.*; *Saddharma.*, *loc. cit.*; *Aṣṭasāhasrikā.*, pp. 69-70, 72-73, 95, 112, 140, 190; *Mahāyāna-sūtra.*, Pt. I, p. 258.

he is not a king of all gods ; he rules only over the Tāvatiṃsa gods.^{132a}

We have seen Āditya as a son of the Buddha in Mahāyāna mythology. The Hinayāna also mentions Ādicca as the Buddha's son. In support of this, the *Samyuttanikāya*¹³³ states that the Buddha speaks of Ādicca as *mama pajā* which Buddhaghosa¹³⁴ explains as the Buddha's disciple or spiritual son. He also explains Ādicca as the Buddha's *orasa-putta* (breast-born son).¹³⁵

Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme God of Brāhmaṇical literature, is mentioned in the Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist literature¹³⁶ as a proverbially powerful personage.

132a Both Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist texts (*Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā*, Vol. I, p. 273 ; Vol. III, pp. 216ff. ; *Jātaka*, Vol. IV, pp. 180, 265 ; *Divyāvadāna*, pp. 194-95 ; *Avadāna*, Vol. II, p. 89 ; *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 7127) mention Paṇḍukambalasilā (Pāṇḍukambalaśilā) as the throne of Indra. In connection with Sakka's family, it may be noted that the *Sudhābhajana Jātaka* (*Jātaka*, Vol. V, pp. 399-405) and *Mahāvastu*, Vol. II, pp. 57-59, mention Śrī or Śirī (Pali *Sirī*), Śraddhā (Saddhā), Āśā (Āsā), and Hri (Hirī) as four daughters of Śakra who are personifications, respectively, of glory, faith, hope and modesty. They are called *Devakumārikā* in the *Mahāvastu*, Vol. III, p. 309, and *Lalita*, p. 391.

133 Vol. I, p. 57.

134 Malalasekera, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 245, s.v. *Ādiccabandhu*.

135 *Vimāna. Comm.*, PTS, p. 116. Buddhaghosa also, in the same way as the Vedas (Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 30), says that Āditya is Aditi's son (Malalasekera, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 245, s.v. *Ādicca*).

136 *Cūlavamśa*, Ch. 47, verse 25 ; *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 8214 ; *Lalita*, pp. 109-10, 202, 291 ; *Saddharma*, p. 428 ; *Mūlasarvāstivāda*, Vol. I, p. 271. *Nārāyaṇa-balam*, a certain measure of physical strength, is used as the strength of the Buddha in many Sanskrit Buddhist texts. This shows that Nārāyaṇa, in later literature, is none other than the Buddha. In this connection, it may be remembered that Viṣṇu is one of the countless names of the Buddha. As Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa are identical in Brāhmaṇical literature, the application of these names to the Buddha in Mahāyāna mythology is intelligible. But in some other later texts, Nārāyaṇa is regarded as inferior to the Buddha. For example, the *Kāraṇḍa*. (see above, note 15) shows that Nārāyaṇa is produced from the Buddha. The *Mahāparinirvāṇa*. (ed. Waldschmidt), 31.12, says that the Buddha possesses power of many hundred Nārāyaṇas.

Lakṣmī (Lakkhī)¹³⁷ or Śrī (Siri),¹³⁸ the goddess of good fortune, and Alakṣmī (Alakkhī),¹³⁹ the goddess of evil fortune, are mentioned in both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna.

Unlike Brāhmaṇical literature, Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist texts speak of many Brahmās ; but none of them is regarded as the highest being. They are inferior to the Buddha.¹⁴⁰ According to the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*,¹⁴¹ Brahman is not supreme because he is created by the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. Both the early and later Buddhist texts mention Mahābrahmās (great Brahmās) ; but as they are impermanent and belong to the first *jhāna*, they are not higher than the Buddha. However, the following names of Brahmās are common in Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist literature—(a) Sahāṃpati (Sahampati),¹⁴² (b) Sanatkumāra (Sanaṅkumāra),¹⁴³ (c) Ghaṭikāra,¹⁴⁴ (d) Tiṣya (Tissa),¹⁴⁵ (e) Baka¹⁴⁶ and

137 See Haldar in *Foreigners*, etc., pp. 142ff. ; Getty, *op. cit.*, pp. 61, 103 ; *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*, p. 48.

138 *Jātaka*, Vol. III, p. 259 ; *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*, intro., p. 11.

139 *Jātaka*, *loc. cit.* ; *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*, p. 87.

140 *Dīgha*, Vol. I, pp. 211-23 ; *Mahāyānasūtra*, Pt. I, pp. 258, 265 ; see also above, notes 29, 30 and 92.

141 See above, note 15.

142 *Saṃyutta*, Vol. I, pp. 137f. ; Vol. V, p. 233 ; *Buddhavaṃsa Comm.*, p. 287 ; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. II, p. 63 ; Vol. III, p. 381 ; *Saddharma*, Chap. I ; *Mahāyānasūtra*, Pt. I, p. 258 ; *Dīvyāvadāna*, pp. 613, 652, 655 ; *Avadāna*, Vol. I, pp. 305, 311, 317, 329, 337, 343 ; Vol. II, p. 198 ; *Lalita*, pp. 73, 83, 130, 274 ; *Suvarṇabhāsottama*, pp. 84-91 ; *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, pp. 75, 295. The commentaries on the *Majjhima* (PTS, Vol. II, p. 372) and *Buddhavaṃsa* (pp. 12, 29) explain him as Sahakapati and the *Lalita*, pp. 44, 61, 63, 69-70, and other Sanskrit Buddhist texts speak of him as Sahāpati.

143 Malalasekera, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 1022 ; *Dīgha*, Vol. II, pp. 200-19 ; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. II, p. 197 ; Vol. III, pp. 212, 344.

144 *Dhammapada Comm.*, Vol. I, p. 380 ; *Jātaka*, Vol. I, p. 65 ; *Sutta Comm.*, Vol. II, p. 382 ; *Vimāna Comm.*, p. 314 ; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, p. 319 ; Vol. II, pp. 150, 152 ; *Mūlasarvāstivāda*, Vol. I, p. 217.

145 *Dīgha*, Vol. II, p. 261 ; *Mahāsamāja*, 191.11.

146 *Majjhima*, Vol. I, pp. 326-31 ; *Jātaka*, Vol. III, pp. 358ff. ; See Lévi, *Mahākarmavibhaṅga and Karmavibhaṅgopadeśa*, 34.8. Baka is described as one of the Mahābrahmās in Pali texts ; but in the *Baka-Pratyekabrahma*, he is regarded as a Pratyeka-Brahmā.

(f) Subrahmā.¹⁴⁷

Hell. As regards hell, the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna Buddhists hold more or less the same view. The Jātakas,¹⁴⁸ *Abhidharma-kośa*,¹⁴⁹ *Mahāvastu*,¹⁵⁰ *Divyāvadāna*,¹⁵¹ *Dharmasaṅgraha*,¹⁵² and *Mahāvvyutputti*^{152a} mention various kinds of punishments in hells like the following.

1. *Sañjīva*. It is so called because beings are cut to pieces and come again to life for suffering the same punishment.

2. *Kālasutta* (*Kālasūtra*). The inhabitants of this hell are struck down with blazing weapons and are cut to pieces with weapons called *Kālasutta*.

3. *Samghāta*. Beings are crushed with burning mountains for which the hell is so called.

4. *Roruva* (*Raurava*).¹⁵³ Here the sinners are consumed by a dreadful fire.

5. *Mahāroruva* (*Mahāraurava*). The fire of this hell is fiercer than that of *Roruva*.

6. *Tapana*. It is so called because the sinners have to suffer from a terrible heat in it.

7. *Patāpana* (*Pratāpana*). The heat of this hell is excessive.

8. *Avīci*. It is the most fearful of the *nirayas*. The *Jātaka*

147 In the *Saṃyutta*., Vol. I, pp. 146ff., he is regarded as a Pacceka-Brahmā; but the *Lalita*., pp. 359-60, describes him as a leader of the Brahmakāyika gods.

148 E.g., *Jātaka*, Vol. V, pp. 266-75; *JPTS*, 1884, pp. 154-56.

149 Chap. III.

150 Vol. I, pp. 5, 9, 13, 21, 42, 337; Vol. II, p. 350; Vol. III, pp. 274, 454.

151 See pp. 67, 138, 366.

152 Section 121; cf. *Mahāvvyutputti*, 4921-23, 4925, etc.; *Gaṇḍavyūha*, p. 157; *Avadāna*., Vol. I, p. 4.

152a 4920-27.

153 The *Raurava* and *Mahāraurava* are mentioned in the Sanskrit texts. The Pali texts state that the name of the *Roruva* hell is derived from the proper name *Ruru*. It has been divided in the Jātakas into (1) *Jālaroruva*, the hell of flame, and (2) *Dhūmaroruva*, the hell of smoke. But the *Pañcagatidīpana* mentions *Roruva* and *Mahāroruva*. The *Saṃyutta*., Vol. I, pp. 92-93 (cf. *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā*, Vol. IV, p. 79) refers to *Mahāroruva*.

commentator¹⁵⁴ says that the hell is so called because there is no cessation either of the fire or of the pain. The *Abhidharma-kośa* describes Avīci as the place where there is no happiness. It says that the hell is twenty thousand *yojanas* below the Jambu continent.

According to the early and later Hīnayāna works, the constitution of these hells is as follows. Each hell has four corners and four doors and is divided equally into four divisions. It is surrounded by iron walls on all sides and has an iron roof. Its floor is made of burning iron one hundred *yojanas* around.¹⁵⁵ Besides, there are four minor hells (*utsada*) to each of the four sides of each hot hell. The punishment of these minor hells is suffering from horror and terrible misery.¹⁵⁶ In the *Abhidharmakośa*¹⁵⁷ and *Mahāvastu*,¹⁵⁸ the four *utsadas* belonging to each of the hot hells are (1) *Kukkula*,^{158a} the hell of ashes, (2) *Kuṇapa*,^{158b} the hell of dung, (3) *Khuramārga* (*Asipatravana*,^{158c} the forest of trees with leaves of swords; *Śālmalivana*,^{158d} the forest of Śālmali trees, and the place full of Śyāma and Śavala dogs) and (4) the *Nadī* (*Khārodaka*=*Vaitaraṇī*). The *Pañcagatidīpana*¹⁵⁹ mentions the following four *Ussadas*—(1) *Miṭhakūpa*, the hell of dung, where beings are eaten up by worms; (2) *Kukkula*, (3) *Asipattavana* and (4) *Nadī* (*Vetaraṇī*). The *Āṅguttara*¹⁶⁰ and

154 *Jātaka*, Vol. V, p. 271.

155 Cf. *catukanno catudvāro vibhatto bhāgasō mito/*
ayopākāra-pariyanto ayasā paṭikujjito/
tassa ayomayā bhūmi jalitā tejasā yutā/
samantā yojana-sataṃ pharitvā tatthati sabbadā ti/

(*Jātaka*, Vol. V, p. 266; *Āṅguttara*, Vol. I, pp. 141-42; *Majjhima*, Vol. III, p. 183; *Abhidharma*, Chap. III).

156 *Jātaka*, Vol. I, p. 168; Vol. IV, p. 493; Vol. V, p. 272.

157 See Chap. III.

158 Vol. I, pp. 5, 6, 11; Vol. III, pp. 185, 369, 455.

158a *Mahāvvyutpatti*, 4931.

158b *Ibid.*, 4938.

158c *Ibid.*, 4942.

158d *Ibid.*, 4941.

159 *JPTS*, 1884, pp. 155f.

160 Vol. I, pp. 141-42.

*Majjhima*¹⁶¹ *Nikāyas* do not mention the eight hells as indicated above. These texts speak of a *Mahāniraya* which, according to some scholars, is identical with *Avīci*. The *Mahāniraya* has five adjacent hells, wherein the sinners fall and suffer. These are : (1) *Gūṭha*, (2) *Kukkula*, (3) *Simbalivana*, (4) *Asipattavana* and (5) *Khārodakanadī*. The four minor hells mentioned in the *Abhidharmakośa* has some conformity with these five. However, both Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist texts contain the same view that the *Mahāniraya* is surrounded by minor hells.

The Sanskrit Buddhist literature¹⁶² mentions eight cold hells—(1) *Arbuda*, (2) *Nirarbuda*, (3) *Aṣaṣa*, (4) *Hahava*, (5) *Huhuva* or *Hāhādhara*, (6) *Utpala*, (7) *Padma*, and (8) *Mahāpadma*. The *Saṃyutta*¹⁶³ and *Anguttara*¹⁶⁴ *Nikāyas* and the *Suttanipāṭa*¹⁶⁵ use the same nomenclature with a few variations and additions which, according to Buddhaghosa,¹⁶⁶ are not separate hells, but specified periods¹⁶⁷ of suffering in the *Avīci*.

As mentioned above,¹⁶⁸ the Lokantarika series of hells described in the Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist works mark the similarity between the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna mythology.

161 Vol. III, p. 185.

162 *Abhidharma.*, Chap. III ; *Dharmasaṅgraha*, Sec. 122 ; *Dīvyāvadāna*, pp. 67, 138 ; *Mahāvīyūtpatti*, 4929-36 ; *Avadāna.*, Vol. I, p. 4.

163 Vol. I, pp. 149-52.

164 Vol. V, p. 173.

165 See p. 126 ; *SBE*, Vol. X, p. 119 ; Kern, *op. cit.*, p. 58 ; *Ency. Rel. Eth.*, Vol. IV, p. 133.

166 *Anguttara Comm.*, Vol. V, pp. 61-62.

167 *Abbuda*, *Nirabbuda*, *Ababa*, *Aṣaṣa*, *Ahaha*, *Kumuda*, *Sogandhika*, *Uppala*, *Puṇḍarika* and *Paduma* are counted in a geometrical progression of twenty (i.e. twenty *Abbudas*=one term of *Nirabbuda*, twenty *Nirabbudas*=one term of *Ababa*, etc.). An *Abbuda* was reckoned as the time taken to remove twenty Kosalan Khāris (equal to a cartload) of *tila* seeds, taking one seed at the end of each century. See also *Kindred Sayings*, Vol. I, p. 190, notes 1 and 2. The *Sutta. Comm.*, Vol. II, p. 447, gives an *Abbuda* as equal to 100,000 *ninnahutas* and 20 of it are one *nirabbuda* (*Anguttara. Comm.*, *loc. cit.*).

168 See above, notes 47-49 ; also *Mahāvīyūtpatti*, 3062.

The number of these hells is innumerable because there are many *cakkavālas* in the universe. Darkness prevails in these hells.¹⁶⁹ It is tumultuous and dreadful as the light from the sun and moon does not reach it.¹⁷⁰

Spirits and Semi-Divine Beings. The word 'spirit' is generally applied to those who are dead on earth and are reborn in different worlds in accordance with their earned merit and demerit through various deeds, good and evil. Both Hinayāna and Mahāyāna follow Hindu mythology and say that spirits who earn merits are reborn in the *Devaloka* and *Brahmaloka* and those earning demerits are born in four *Apāyalokas*, i.e., they are reborn among (1) animals, (2) *Asuras*, (3) *Petas* or ghosts and (4) inhabitants of hell.^{170a} The *Petaloka* is regarded as a kind of hell because the spirits of the dead suffer here from severe pain owing to their misdeeds of previous births.¹⁷¹ La Vallée Poussin¹⁷² says that though the *Petas* are found throughout the world of men, they dwell especially in the kingdom of Yama, which is divided into 36 provinces, situated 500 *yojanas* below Jambudīpa.

Besides, supernatural beings are regarded as spirits who become visible at their pleasure and are frequently conceived as good or hostile to mankind. They are divided into two categories, good and evil. The evil spirits are troublesome and terrifying demons. They are *Asuras*, *Yakkhas*, *Rakkhasas*, *Pisācas*, *Māras*, etc. But the *Yakkhas* are sometimes regarded as semi-divine beings. The spirits that dwell in the gardens, houses, hills, rivers, seas, royal umbrellas, waters, etc., are generally treated as semi-divine. Of them, those causing anxiety, fear, etc., to mankind are grouped as demons or evil spirits.

169 E.g., *Dīgha*, Vol. II, p. 12 ; Edgerton, *op. cit.*, s.v. *lokāntarika*.

170 *Jātaka*, Vol. VI, p. 247 ; Edgerton, *loc. cit.*

170a E.g. *Petavatthu*, p. 66 ; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, pp. 30-31 ; *Mahāvastu-patti*, 4749-52.

171 B. C. Law, *Buddhist Conception of Spirits*, p. viii ; *Jātaka*, Vol. VI, p. 595 ; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. II, p. 324 ; Winternitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 307-08.

172 *Ency. Rel. Eth.*, Vol. IV, p. 134.

As mentioned above,¹⁷³ four great kings of the Cātum-mahārājika-world are the guardian spirits of the four quarters who rule respectively over the Gandhabbas, Kumbhāṇḍas, Nāgas and Yakkhas.¹⁷⁴ These are regarded as lower gods. Besides, the Garuḍas, Kinnaras, etc., are also classed as spirits.

We shall discuss below how the spirits and semi-divine beings of early mythology are borrowed in later mythology.

Nāgas and Garuḍas. According to the early and later Buddhist texts, the Nāgas and Garuḍas are minor deities.¹⁷⁵ The Buddhists, like the Hindus, believed that the Nāgas were in constant terror of the Garuḍas.¹⁷⁶ The serpent-gods became devotees of the Buddha to protect themselves from the attack of the Garuḍas.¹⁷⁷ They prayed to the Buddha for protection and the latter appointed the god Vajrapāṇi¹⁷⁸ as their special protector.

The Nāgas, in return, protected the Buddha on several occasions. Once a Nāga king protected the Buddha from a heavy storm and rains by spreading his hood above the latter's head like an umbrella.¹⁷⁹ In the same manner, the later Buddhists¹⁸⁰ state that, when Māra, the god of evil, began to

173 See note 98.

174 *Loc. cit.*; *Dīgha.*, Vol. II, pp. 207f.; 257-58; Vol. III, pp. 194f.; *Divyāvadāna*, pp. 126, 182.

175 *Jātaka*, Vol. I, pp. 497f.; Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

176 *Dīgha.*, Vol. I, p. 54; *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. III, p. 240; Vol. V, pp. 47, 63; Getty, *loc. cit.*; *Jātaka*, Vol. II, p. 13; Vol. III, p. 103.

177 *Mahāvamsa* and *Mahābodhivamsa* (Malalasekera, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 1355); Getty, *loc. cit.* The Garuḍas were virtuous (*Jātaka*, Vol. VI, pp. 178, 184, 261f.).

178 According to Grünwedel, Vajrapāṇi is identical with Śakra or Indra, the Indian god of rains. He is 'both the ferocious emanation of Vajradhara and the spiritual reflex, the Dhyāni-Bodhisattva, of Akṣobhya'; but Alice Getty is of the opinion that he is mentioned as a minor deity in the early Buddhist legends (Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 48). Buddhaghosa (Malalasekera, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 808) identifies Vajrapāṇi with Sakka. There is no doubt that Sakka of the early Buddhist mythology is inferior to the Buddha; but he may not be regarded as a minor deity because, as the king of the Tāvātimsa-gods (see above), he holds an important position in the *Devaloka*.

179 *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 182.

180 Getty, *op. cit.*, intro., p. xx.

disturb the Buddha's meditation, Mucilinda (Pali *Mucalinda*), a serpent king, wound his coils about him and spread his hoad over his head for protecting him from the attack of Māra.¹⁸¹ Besides, the Nāgas miraculously multiplied and enlarged their heads and shielded the Buddha from the rays of the sun. This reminds us of Viṣṇu of the Hindu mythology.¹⁸²

Worship of the Nāgas is found in both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. According to the Pali texts,¹⁸³ the Nāgas are offered sacrifices of milk, rice, fish, meal and strong drinks. As mentioned above,¹⁸⁴ they are the deities of rain-clouds and protect the devotees from lightning and bring or stop rains.¹⁸⁵

Gandhabbas. The Gandhabbas are regarded as semi-divine beings in both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna.^{185a} Of the Gandhabbas, Pañcasikha was celebrated in the Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist texts.¹⁸⁶ The *Dīghanikāya Commentary*¹⁸⁷ states that Pañcasikha was a favourite of the Devas and of the Buddha. When Sakka visited the Buddha, he sent Pañcasikha in advance for obtaining permission for an interview.¹⁸⁸ The Devas loved him and wished to resemble him. Brahmā Sanañkumāra assumed the form of Pañcasikha at the assembly of the gods of Tāvatiṃsa.¹⁸⁹

Pañcasikha is regarded as an office (like Sakka) in both Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist texts,¹⁹⁰ because he is subject to

181 *Ibid.*, p. 154 ; cf. *Lalita.*, p. 379 ; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. III, p. 300.

182 Getty, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.* [Probably the Anantaśāyin form of Viṣṇu is meant; but the conceptions are not the same.—Ed.]

183 *Jātaka*, Vol. I, pp. 497f. [For 'meal', probably 'meat' is intended.—Ed.]

184 See notes 29 and 30.

185 Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

185a *Dīgha.*, Vol. II, p. 212 ; *Mahāvastu*, 3219.

186 *Dīgha. Comm.*, Vol. III, p. 699 ; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. III, pp. 197, 215 ; *Avadāna.*, Vol. I, pp. 95, 113 ; *Samādhirāja.*, pp. 19, 37 ; *Ārya-Mañjuśrī.*, 46.1.

187 Vol. III, p. 699.

188 *Dīgha.*, Vol. II, pp. 263ff.

189 *Dīgha. Comm.*, Vol. II, p. 640.

190 *Jātaka*, Vol. IV, p. 69 ; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. II, p. 49.

death and any one who earns requisite merit on earth is reborn among the Gandhabbas as Pañcasikha.

Devāsurasāṅgrāma and the Asuras. Both Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist texts state that there was a continuous struggle between the Devas and the Asuras.¹⁹¹ As in the early texts, later Buddhist literature¹⁹² places Rāhu and Vemacitrī or Vaimacitra (Pali *Vepacitti*) in the list of Asura kings.

Some of the celestial Bodhisattvas, male and female (e.g. Māricī), created in later Buddhist mythology, were fiendish in nature.¹⁹³ With the introduction of Kālacakrayāna, we hear of many demons who, according to Waddell,¹⁹⁴ “were monstrous ‘king-devils’ of the most hideous Śaivite type, with their equally repulsive spouses”. They were worshipped when a man was attacked by minor demons. This reminds us of Yakkha worship of the early Buddhists.¹⁹⁵ The *Dīghanikāya*¹⁹⁶ says that Karatiya, one of the greater Yakkhas, was invoked by the followers of the Buddha when they were assailed by the evil spirits.¹⁹⁷

Yakkhas. Both the early and later systems of Buddhism say that the Yakkhas, who are non-human beings, possess different characteristics. Generally speaking, they are semi-divine beings¹⁹⁸ having super-normal powers by which they

191 For details about *Devāsurasāṅgrāma*, see *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. I, pp. 216ff. ; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, p. 30 ; Getty, *op. cit.*, p. xxii, note 1.

192 *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. I, p. 222 ; Vol. IV, pp. 201ff. ; *Jātaka*, Vol. I, p. 205 ; Malalasekera, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 924 ; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. III, pp. 138, 254 ; *Lalita.*, p. 241 ; *Dīvyāvadāna*, pp. 126, 182 ; *Saddharma.*, p. 5 ; *Gaṇḍavyūha*, p. 250 ; *Avadāna.*, Vol. I, p. 108 ; *Ārya-Mañjuśrī.*, 655.11 ; 663.21.

193 Waddell, in *Ency. Rel. Eth.*, Vol. IV, pp. 571-72 ; Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

194 *Ency. Rel. Eth.*, *loc. cit.*

195 *Vimāna. Comm.*, pp. 224, 333.

196 Vol. III, pp. 204f.

197 Several direct references to sacrificial offerings to the Yakkha demons are mentioned in the *Jātakas* (Vol. II, p. 149 ; Vol. III, p. 146). The *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*. (ed. Vaidya, intro., p. 11, says that the Yakṣas and demons protect the listeners of the *Sūtra*.

198 *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. I, p. 205 ; *Amitāyurdhyāna.*, Pt. IV ; *SBE*, Vol. XLIX, p. 201. Northern Buddhism also speaks of the worship of the Yakṣiṇī

can influence men and become partly helpful or harmful to them. Even though some of the Yakkhas do not believe in the Buddha and his teachings¹⁹⁹ and molest the followers of the Buddha in their woodland haunts,²⁰⁰ the *Mahāsamaya Sutta* (*Dīghanikāya*),²⁰¹ *Lalitavistara*, *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*,²⁰² *Kāraṇḍavyūha*²⁰³ *Suvarṇaprabhāsa Sūtra*,²⁰⁴ etc., mention the Yakkhas' devotion to the Buddha. The said works also state that the gods of the *Devalokas* and *Brahmalokas*, as well as the Nāgas, Kinnaras, Gandharvas, Garuḍas, Asuras, etc., have devotion to the Buddha.

Māra. The conception of Māra's attack on the Buddha as found in the Pali works is borrowed by the later Buddhists.²⁰⁵ In support of this, later works like the *Lalitavistara*, *Buddhacarita* and *Mahāvastu* mention elaborately the same conflict of Māra with the Buddha as hinted at in the *Padhāna Sutta* of the *Suttanipāta*.

Māra is generally regarded as the personification of evil spirit trying to prevent Śākyasiṃha from becoming the Buddha. He tries to turn him from the path of emancipation by threats and temptation.

Māra is often styled Namuci in both the early and later

as a giver of children (Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 75). According to the *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, p. 30, three classes of Yakṣas—(1) Karoṭapāṇi, (2) Mālādhara and (3) Sadāmatta supported the Devas in their fight with the Asuras because of which they were regarded as Devas. This conception is also found in Mahāyāna Buddhism as the *Mahāvyūtpatti*, 3150-52, includes the above classes of Yakṣas in the list of *Devatās*. Though the Mālādhara and Sadāmatta classes are not mentioned in the Pali texts, the *Dīgha*. (see above, note 197) mentions Karatiya as a protector of the followers of the Buddha.

199 *Dīgha.*, Vol. III, pp. 194f.

200 *Udāna*, PTS, IV. 4.

201 Vol. II, p. 256 ; also above, notes 29 and 30.

202 Chap. I.

203 *Mahāyānasūtrasaṅgraha*, Pt. I, pp. 258, 265, 269, 277, etc.

204 *Suvarṇaprabhāsa.*, intro., p. 11.

205 Ling, *op. cit.*, p. 48 ; Getty, *op. cit.*, pp. xx and 9.

Buddhist mythology.²⁰⁶ The Pali texts²⁰⁷ mention five Māras —Khanda-Māra (Skanda-Māra), Kilesa-Māra (Kleśa-Māra), Abhisaṅkhāra-Māra, Maccu-Māra (Mṛtyu-Māra) and Devaputta-Māra. The Sanskrit Buddhist texts²⁰⁸ refer to the said Māras excepting Abhisaṅkhāra.

Devaputta-Māra²⁰⁹ holds the position of the head of the Kāmāvacara-world. He is described as a being of great power, with a strong bent for mischief, especially directed against holy men. The *Buddhacarita*²¹⁰ refers almost to the same conception and speaks of Māra as Kāmadeva, the god of desire. He strives to tempt the Buddha by the attractions of his three daughters, namely, Taṇhā, Arati and Ragā. Māra and his army take different fearsome shapes and carry dreadful weapons to attack the Buddha. But their attempts are all in vain.²¹¹

206 Ling, *op. cit.*, p. 56 ; *Mahāvastu*, Vol. I, p. 264 ; Vol. II, pp. 238, 413 ; Vol. III, pp. 254, 381 ; *Lalita.*, pp. 261, 302, 311, 328, 357 ; *Divyāvadāna*, p. 393 ; *Daśabhūmika.*, pp. 28, 90 ; *Ārya-Mañjuśrī.*, p. 171 ; *Samādhirāja.*, p. 19 ; *Rāṣṭrapāla.*, p. 58.

207 E.g., *Visuddhi.*, p. 211 ; Malalasekera, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 611, 613.

208 E.g., *Mahāvastu*, Vol. III, pp. 281ff. ; also see *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. I, pp. 103f., 273 ; *Saddharma.*, p. 290.

209 *Anguttara.*, Vol. II, p. 17 ; also *Lalita.*

210 See Chap. XIII ; *Saṃyutta.*, Vol. I, pp. 124f. ; *Mahāvastu.*, *loc. cit.* ; *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā*, Vol. III, pp. 195f.

211 *Loc. cit.*

PLATE I



Fig. 1. King Narasimha I worshipping Śiva-liṅga, Jagannātha and Mahiṣāsūramardini. Konarak Museum. Copyright—Archaeological Survey of India.

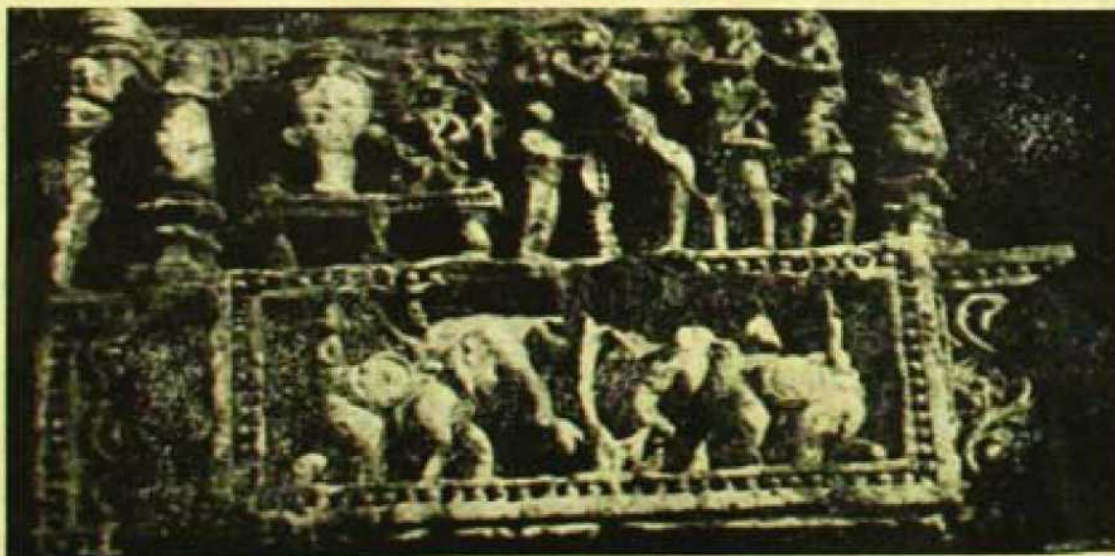


Fig. 2. Puruṣottama-Jagannātha. Enlarged from Fig. 1.

Fig. 3. Sculptured Panel on the Wall of the Platform, Konarak Temple. Courtesy—Sri B. N. Biswas, Calcutta.

N. B. Photograph of the sculpture in the National Museum was not available for illustration.

INDEX

- Ababa* 151
Abbuda 151n
Ābhassara 140 ; *Brahma-world* 138
Abhidhammatthasaṅgraha 143n
Abhidhānappadīpikā 72
Abhidharmakośa 60, 134n, 136-38, 141, 149-50
Abhinidhāna Kāṇva Sāman 18
Abhisāṅkhāra-Māra 157
Abhivartta Sāman 14
Ādi-Buddha 124, 126-28, 131, 132 and n, 146
Ādicca 145, 147
Ādiccabandhu 147n
Ādi-Dharma 132n
Ādinātha 126
Ādi-Prajñā 132n
Aditi 147n
Āditya 94, 109, 127, 145-46, 147 and n
Ādityahṛdaya 5
Advaita Vedānta 63
Ādyācaraṇa 117
Aggañña Sutta 137
Aggi 145
Agni 5, 13 and n, 18n, 19 and n, 46-47, 74-78, 143n, 145-46
Agni Purāṇa 96 and n, 97
Agniśtoma Sāman 17
Ahaha 151n
Ahīyava Sāman 17
Ailavila 79
Akaniṣṭha, Akaniṭṭha 132, 142
Ākṣāra Sāman 15
Akṣobhya 35n, 124, 153n
Akupāra 18 ; *Sāman* 18, 20
Alakkhī, Alakṣmī 148
Al-Bīrūnī 63
Allahabad 78
Allan, J. 82, 83n, 84n, 92n, 93n
Altekar, A. S. 82-83 and n, 84 and n, 85n, 86 and n, 87n, 88n, 90 and n, 92n
Amara 79 ; *kośa* 77, 79n
Ambikā 88
Amburāja (Varuṇa) 76
Amitābha 38n, 124, 127-28, 133 and n
Amoghasidhi 124
Āmrakārdava 90
Amṛta Dhāraṇī 38
Anaṅgabhīma II 103-04, 106-08
Anantadevī 83, 90
Ananta (Viṣṇu) 80
Anantaśāyīn (Viṣṇu) 154n
Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga 105-07
Anantavāsudeva temple 103, 107-08
Anāthapiṇḍada 35
Aṅgīrasas 15
Āṅguttaranikāya 72, 131, 151
Anila (Vāyu) 77 and n
Annapūrnā 113
Antaka (Yama) 78
Apālā 18-19
Aparagoyāna 137 and n
Āpastamba 52 n , *Dharmasūtra* 47, 48n, 52, 54, 69
Arahant 122, 129
Arati 157
Arbuda 151
Ardhanārīśvara 97
Ardheḍā Sāman 16
Ariṣṭa Sāman 16
Ariyapariyesaṇā Sutta 130n
Arjuna 74
Arka (Sūrya) 77
Arthaśāstra 8
Aruṇa 100
Ārya-Maṅjuśrīmūlakalpa 135n
Āryaśūra 55

- Ārya-Tārā 124
 Āsā, Āśā 147n
Asipatravana 150
 Asitāṅga 98
 Aśoka 48n, 52-53, 67-68, 70, 72n
 Assakaṇṇa 136
 Assam 113, 118
 Aṣṭamahābhaya-Tārā 29
Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā 135n
 Aśvaghoṣa 61
 Aśvalāyana 47 ; *Gṛhyasūtra* 47
 Aśvamedha 84, 89
 Āśvayuja festival 47-48
 Aśvin 19-20
Aṭaṭa 151 and n
Atharvaveda 22, 46, 48 ; *pariśista* 48n
Atiśvara Sāman 16
 Atri 16, 20
Avadānaśataka 66, 140n
 Avalambāna—festival 26-38 ; *Sūtra* 2, 35
 Avalokiteśvara 26-27, 127-28, 146, 148
 Avalon, A. 112n, 113n, 115n, 116n, 119n
 Avīci 132-33, 149-51
 Avimukta-kṣetra 95
Āyāraṅga Sutta 53
 Ayodhyā 93n
 Bādarāyaṇa 58n
 Bajpeyi, Sm. K. 1
 Baka 130, 148 and n
 Bala, Balarāma 103
 Banaras 51, 113
 Bandyopadhyay, S. 1, 3-4, 7-8, 91
 Banerjea, J. N. 5, 12, 91, 93-94, 99n, 111n
 Banerji, R. D. 86n
 Banpur 107
Bārhaspatya 120 ; *Arthaśāstra* 105
 Barhut 73
 Barua, B. M. 67n, 73n
 Basham, A. L. 82n
Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra 68
 Behera, K. S. 101, 121n
 Bendall 136n
 Bhaga 109
Bhāgavata Purāṇa 70-71
Bhagavadgītā 66, 70, 104n
Bhagvat 40n
 Bhairava 5, 97-98, 100
Bhaisajyārāja 27
 Bhaṇja dynasty 105n
 Bhānudeva II 105n
 Bhargaon 100
Bhāsa Sāman 20
 Bhaṭṭacārya, Raghunandana 113
 Bhattacharya 61n
 Bhattacharya 112n, 113n
 Bhattacharya, A. K. 104
 Bhattacharya, N. N. 1-3, 57
 Bhattacharya, R.K. 1-3, 5-7, 10
 Bhattacharya, Tarapada 98
Bhaviṣya Purāṇa 54, 71
Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa 54
 Bhīṣaṇa 98
 Bhojadeva 113
 Bhubaneswar 101, 105, 107, 108n
 Bhusari 79 and n
 Bhūtapati (Śiva) 105
 Bhuvaneśvarī 113, 119-20
 Billorey, R.K. 1, 9, 110
 Bimbisāra 42
 Bishan Swarup 102, 103 and n
 Biswas, D.K. 98
 Bloch, T. 103 and n
 Bloomfield 18n
 Bodhgaya 90, 112
Bodhicaryāvatāra 62n, 135n
 Bodhicitta 125
 Bodhisattva 26, 51, 123-25, 128, 132, 134, 145n, 146, 148, 155
Bodhisattvabhūmi 138n, 143n, 148n
 Bombay 113
 Bon-doro 33
 Bon festival 34

- Bon-jochin 33
 Bose, D. N. 112n
 Brahmā 129-30, 132, 134, 140-41, 144n, 148
Brahmacarya (āśrama) 82
Brahmajāla Sutta 23 and n, 129
 Brāhma marriage 115 and n
 Brahman 5, 49, 80, 95, 108, 126-27, 144n, 148
 Brāhmaṇa 6-7, 21, 43, 48-52, 65, 69, 82, 115, 120-21, 129, 144n
Brahmanimantanika Sutta 130
 Brahmā Prajāpati 146
Brahma Purāṇa 66-67, 70, 107n
Brahma Sāmaṇ 14
 Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra 154
Brahmasūtra 57n
Brhaddevatā 18
Brhat Sāman 17
 Brhaspati 15
 Buddha 6-7, 22-27, 35-38, 40, 43, 51, 61, 72n, 117, 122-23, 124 and n, 125-29, 130 and n, 131-34, 142, 145-46, 147 and n, 148, 153 and n, 154-55, 156 and n, 157
Buddhabhāṣitāmyta Sūtra Dhāraṇī 38
Buddhacarita 6, 53, 61, 62n, 143n, 156-57
 Buddhaghoṣa 147 and n, 151, 153n
Buddhavaṃsa 148n
 Budhagupta 87, 89
 Budhapada 107
Bukkyo Daijiten 34n, 38n
Bukkyo Jirin 33n
 Bundelkhand 99
 Caitanya 103
 Caitra festival 47
Caitya 36
 Cakrin (Kṛṣṇa-Viṣṇu) 103
 Calcutta 2, 91, 106n, 113
 Canda 98
 Caṇḍāla 66, 70, 115
 Caṇḍeśvara temple 106
 Caṇḍī 113n, 114
 Candimā 129, 145
 Chandra 77, 127, 145-46
 Candrādevī 103, 108
 Candragupta I 83, 88, 90
 Candragupta II 83, 84n, 85, 87-88, 90
Candrakalā 120
 Cāndrāyaṇa 70
 Carnoy 129n, 134n
 Cārvāka 3, 62
 Cāteśvara inscription 107
 Catummahārājika (Cāturmahārājika) 72 and n, 140, 142-43, 153
 Candalūra 77
 Ceylon 90
Chaddanta Jātaka 51n
 Chakravarti, A. C. 79n
 Chakravarti, A. K. 3
 Chandra, R. P. 11n
Chāndogya Upaniṣad 68n
 Chatterjee, A. K. 1, 3, 5-8, 86
 Chatterjee, B. 4, 65
 Chatterjee, Sm. B. 5
 Chattopadhyaya, D. P. 58n, 63
 Chidambaram 100
 Childers 42n, 43n, 72
 China 31-32, 34, 36-37
 Chinnamastā 113, 125
 Citraratha 142n
 Cittalatāvana 142n
 Coomaraswamy 18n, 79 and n
 Cowell 51n, 52n, 56n, 135n
Cūlavāṃsa 136n, 145n, 147n
Cullavagga 23, 24n, 25, 50 and n
 Cuttack 103n, 107
 Cyavana 19-20; *Sāman* 17
 Dākinī 125
 Dakṣa Prajāpati temple 107
 Dākṣiṇātya (South India) 81
 Dāmalipata (Tāmralipta) 55
 Daṇḍin 55, 78, 99-100
 Darśa 4

- Dāruvana 95
Daśabhūmika Sūtra 138
 Daśaharā 118
Daśakumāracarita 48n, 55 and n
 Daśa-mahāvidyā 119
 Das, D. R. 4-5, 8
 Dasgupta, S. B. 113n
 Dasgupta, S. N. 57n
 Delhi 2
 Deo, S. B. 91
 Devāditya 117
 Devaputta-Māra 157
 Devasthali 16 and n, 17n, 19n, 21n
 Dhammaddhaja 146n
Dhammapada 145n, 148n ; *aṭṭhakathā*
 142n, 147n, 149n, 157n
 Dhanada (Kubera) 77n, 78-79
 Dhanādhipa 79
 Dhaneśa (Kubera) 74-75
Dhāraṇī 27-29, 145-46 ; *pīṭaka* 28
Dharmasaṃgraha 80, 137n, 140n, 141
 and n, 143n, 145n, 149
 Dharma (Yama) 73
 Dhataratṭha (Dhṛtarāṣṭra) 72 and n,
 73n, 142
 Dhaumya 76n
 Dhenkanal 105
 Dhṛtarāṣṭra 72-74, 142
 Dhruvadevī 84n
Dhūmaroruva 149n
 Dhyāni-Bodhisattva 127, 153n
 Dhyāni-Buddha 26, 124 and n, 127
 Diggaja 73n
Dīghanikāya 23 and n, 24 and n, 72,
 73n, 129-31, 133, 144, 54-156
 Dikpāla 8, 73-74, 77-78, 80 and n
 Diṇḍi 95
 Dīrghajihvī 19
 Disāgaja 73n
 Disāmpāla 75
Divākīrti Sāman 15
Dīvyāvadāna 73n, 135n, 140n, 142n,
 143n, 144, 147n, 148n, 149, 151n,
 153n, 155n
 Draksharama temple inscription 105
 Draupadī 49
Dukkāṇa 24
Dummedha Jātaka 51 and n
 Dūrgā 55, 88 and n, 102-06, 108-09,
 113 and n, 114, 117-18
Durgābhaktiprakāśa 114
Durgābhaktītārāṅgiṇī 114
 Durgadas 53n
Durvāsomata 120
 Dutta, M. N. 97
 Dutta, N. 122, 130n, 137n
 Dutta, S. 40n, 41n
 Edgerton 138n, 143n, 145n, 152n
 Eggeling 69
 Ekāmra 103
 Ekapiṅga 79
 Eku 34n
 Fa-hien 27, 90
 Finot 135n
 Fleet 82n, 90n, 98
 Gajalakṣmī 3-4, 91, 93 and n
 Gaṇapati 54n
 Gaṇanātha Upādhyāya 117
Gaṇḍavyūha 137n, 143n, 149n, 155n
 Gandhabba (Gandharva) 72, 130-31,
 153-55
 Gandharva 72, 156
 Gandhawal 100
 Gaṇeśa 54 and n, 108, 116
 Ganesvarpur 107
 Gaṅgā 88, 100
 Gaṅgādhara 107n
 Gaṅgā dynasty 105-06, 121n
 Gaṅgopādhyāya, M. K. 58n
 Ganguli, D. K. 1, 4-5
Gautama Dharmasūtra 68n
 Garbe 57n, 60n
Gārhaṣṭhya (āśrama) 82
 Garuḍa 84-85, 88, 130, 153 and n, 156
 Gauḍa 91
Gauṇagava Sāman 19
 Gautama 68n ; *Dharmasūtra* 65, 69
 Oautamīputra Śātakarṇi 48n, 50n

- Gautamiya Tantra* 115
 Gāyatrī 113
 Geldner 46
 Getty, Alice 126n, 132n, 134n, 136n, 144n, 145n, 148n, 153n, 154, 155n, 156n
 Ghaṭikāra 148
 Ghōṣa, P. 135n
Gītā 3, 7, 131n
Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra 47
 Godbole 14n, 18n
 Gogerly, D. J. 136n
 Gokulanātha Upādhyāya 117
 Gopaka 146n
 Gosāunī (Śakti goddess) 117
 Govindapur inscription 107n
 Grünwedel 153n
 Guhyakeśvara 79
 Guhyeśvarī 113
Guṇakāraṇḍavyūha 126
 Guṇaratna 60
 Guttila 146n
 Hāhādhara 151
 Hahava 151
 Halāyudha 114
 Haldar, J. R. 1, 7-8, 122, 132n, 148n
 Halin (Balarāma) 103
 Haradatta 47
Hārāyaṇa Sāman 19
 Hardy, Spence 136n, 137n
 Hari 70
 Harihara 94, 108
 Harinātha Upādhyāya
Harivaṃśa 53, 76, 78
Harivaṇṇa Sāman 16, 18
 Harṣavardhana 85, 91
 Hāthigumphā inscription 48n
Hayaśīrṣapañcarātra 98, 99n
 Haṣra, R. C. 106n, 107n
 Hemādri 95
 Himavat 75
Himitsu Jirin 37 and n, 38n
 Hinayāna 25, 27, 122, 123n, 126, 131, 132 and n, 134 and n, 135-37, 139, 141-44, 146-52, 154
 Hiralal 99
 Hiraṇyagarbha 17
 Hiraṇyaretas 95
 Hiri 147n
 Hiuen-tsang 28, 85
 Hoḍikā 54 and n
 Hopkins 52n, 73n, 74, 75 and n, 76 and n
 Hrī 147n
 Huhuva 151
 Hūṇa 84
 Idzumi 137n
 Inda 144 and n, 146n
 Indra 7, 12, 13 and n, 14-19, 21, 46-47, 53, 73, 74 and n, 75 and n, 76 and n, 77-78, 80, 108, 134, 144, 146, 147n, 153n
Indramaha 7, 47
Indramahotsava (Indramaha) 47
 Indrotsava 53
 Īśa (Īśāna) 77 and n, 80
 Īsadhara (Īsadhara) 136
 Īśāna 96, 97 and n, 143n, 144n
 Iṣṭadevī (symbol of Śakti) 120
 Īśvara 58, 61, 94, 110
 I-tsing 36
 Jacobi 53n, 60n
 Jagannātha 102-03, 105n, 106 and n, 108-09, 113 ; temple 105
Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa 19
 Jalandhar 113
Jālaroruva 149n
 Jambudīpa 137 and n, 152
 Jāṅgulī 125
 Janmāṣṭamī 120
 Japan 2, 31-32, 34, 36-37
Jātakamālā 55
 Jātavedas (Agni) 74, 145
 Jaṭila 24
 Jaya 3, 92-93
 Jayakālī 113

- Jayamaṅgalā* 81
 Jayaswal 79
 Jha 59n
 Jimūtavāhana 113-14
 Jivānanda 48n
 Jivātman 125
 Jñāneśvarī 132n
 Jodo-shinshu 34
 Jvālāmukhī 113 and n
Jyotiṣārṇava 114
Jyotsnāvatī 120
 Kāca 86-88
 Kaccānī 146
Kakkaṭṭa Jātaka 51n
 Kālabhairavī 113
 Kālacakrayāna 125, 155
Kālakaumudī 114
Kālānidhi 120
Kālanirṇaya 114
 Kālāśoka 122
Kālasutta (Kālasūtra) 149
 Kale, M. R. 54n
Kāleya Sāman 16
 Kālī 113 and n, 114, 119
 Kālidāsa 77, 105n
 Kalidindi grant 107n
Kālikā Purāṇa 114n
Kalpataru 114
 Kāmadeva 151
 Kāmadhenu 15 ; *Tantra* 118
 Kāmākhyā 113
 Kāmarūpa 113
Kāmasūtra 9, 81
 Kāmāvacara-world 151
 Kanauj 91
 Kanduk-otsava 55
 Kane, P. V. 52n, 66, 61n, 68n, 70n, 81n
 Kangra District 98
 Kapāla 98
 Kapila 104
 Kapilas hill 105
Kāraṇḍavyūha 21, 121-28, 136, 146, 148, 156
Karatiya 155, 156n
 Karavīka (Khadiraka) 134, 136
 Karoṭapāṇi 156n
 Kārttikeya 88-89
 Karumelli plates 101n
Kāsavā Jātaka 51n
 Kashmir 100, 113
 Kāśī 113
 Kāśyapa 20, 76
Kathāsaritsāgara 53, 54 and n
Kathāvatthu 143n
 Kaṭhina ceremony 31, 39, 44-45
 Kattikā festival 52-53
 Kātyāyanī (Durgā) 105
Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra 89
 Kaumudī festival 54
Kauṣṭhiki Brāhmaṇa 47-48
Kāvyaḍarśa 18
 Keith 19n, 46n, 59n, 129n, 151n
 Kern 131n, 135, 141n, 151n
Kevadha Sutta 23
 Khaḍḍgadhārī 111
 Khadiraka 136
 Khanda-Māra (Skanda-Māra) 157
 Khāravela 48n, 50n
 Khārodaka (Vaitaraṇī) 150
 Kheḍ Brahmā temple 8
 Khotan 38
Khuddakanikāya 25 and n
Khuramārga 150
 Kilesa-Māra (Kleśa-Māra) 157
 Kinnara 99, 130, 153, 156
 Kinnareśa 79
 Kirfel, W. 136n
 Kirtivarman 107n
 Kisanpur (Cuttack District) 107
 Kobo-daishi 34
 Konarak 101-03, 105, 108
 Korea 37
 Kosalan Khāri 151n
 Krodha 98
 Kṛṣṇacandra 118
 Kṛṣṇamiśra 107n
 Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī 120

- Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva 70, 80, 103, 104n, 105 and n, 106n, 131n
 Kṛttivāsas 105
Kṛtyamahārṇava 114
Kṛtyaratnākara 114
Kṛtyatattvārṇava 114
 Kṣatra (Kṣatriya) 12
 Kṣatriya 11-12, 65, 120
 Kṣīrabhavānī 113
 Kṣīrasvāmin 79
 Kubera 8, 72-73, 74 and n, 75-76, 77 and n, 78-80
 Kuberaṇāgā 84n
Kukkula 150
Kulārṇava 120
Kuleśvarī 120
 Kumāradevī 83, 88, 90
 Kumāragupta I 83-90
 Kumāra (Kārttikeya) 88, 145
 Kumāraviṣṇu I 77
 Kumārīla 58
 Kumbhaṇḍa (Kuśmāṇḍa) 72, 153
Kumuda 151n
Kuṇapa 150
 Kuṇḍalinī 118
Kūrma Purāṇa 65n, 69, 78
Kurudhamma Jātaka 52n
 Kusa 146n
 Kuśmāṇḍa 72
 Kusumapura (Pāṭaliputra) 55
 Kuvera 143 and n, 145-46
 Lahiri, A. N. 3, 8
 Lahiri, Sm. B. 1, 3-4, 91
 Lakkhī 131, 132n, 148
 Lakṣmī 9, 84-85, 87, 89, 91-93, 110-11, 113, 148
 Lakṣmīdhara 120
 Lakṣmīnātha Gosāin 117
 Lakṣmīśvarasīmha 118
 Lalitā 113
Lalitavistara 8, 25, 73n, 74, 134 and n, 142, 144, 156
Laṭukika Jātaka 51n
 Law, B. C. 152n
 Lefmann 135n
 Legge, James 90n
 Le'vi 148n
Līṅga Purāṇa 95 and n, 97
 Līṅgarāja-temple 105, 108
 Ling, T. O. 130, 156n, 157n
 Locanā 124
 Lokantarika 135, 151, 152n
 Lokapāla 8, 73 and n, 74, 75 and n, 76, 77 and n, 78-80
 Lokāyata 62
 Maccu-Māra (Mṛtyu-Māra) 157
 Macdonell 14, 15n, 17n, 18n, 19n, 20n, 46n, 147n
 Macnicol, N. 110n
 Madana Upādhyāya 117
 Mādhava 107
 Mādhavācārya 114
 Mādhavānanda temple 107-08
 Madhia (Panna) 99
 Mādhyamika 61 ; *sūtra* 61n
 Madras 113
Mahābhārata 48-49, 52n, 54n, 65-69, 71, 73n, 74-75, 77-78
Mahābhāṣya 80
Mahābodhivaṃsa 153n
 Mahābrahmā 148 and n
 Mahācīnatārā 125
 Mahājanaka 146n
 Mahākappa (great cycle) 139
Mahākarmavibhaṅga 148n ; *opadeśa* 148n
 Mahāmaheśvara 142
 Mahā-Maudgalyāyana 35
Mahāmāyūrī 29
 Mahāmeru 136, 137n
Mahānārada-kassapa Jātaka 56
Mahāniddeśa 137n
Mahānīraya 151
Mahānīrvāṇa Tantra 115, 116 and n
Mahāpadāna Sutta 24
Mahāpadma 151

- Mahāpainirbbāna Sutta* 50n
Mahāpratisarā 29
Mahāpurisalakkhaṇā 133
Mahāpuruṣa 134
Mahārāja (Guardian of Quarter) 72, 73n, 74, 78-80
Mahārājika 79
Mahā[rakṣā]mantrānusārīnī 29
Mahāraurava 149 and n
Mahāruruva (*Mahāraurava*) 149
Mahāsahasrapramardinī 29
Mahāsamāja Sūtra 144
Mahāsamaya Sūtra (*Sutta*) 130, 144, 156
Mahāsaṅghika 122, 123 and n
Mahāśitavatī 29
Mahāvagga 24n, 43, 50, 51n
Mahā-Vairocana 38n
Mahāvalāhaka 144
Mahāvamsa 153n
Mahāvastu 25, 35, 73n, 74, 133n, 135n, 136n, 137 and n, 138n, 139n, 140n, 142n, 143n, 144n, 147n, 148n, 149-50, 152n, 154, 155n, 156 and n, 157n
Mahāvvyutpatti 135n, 137n, 138n, 140n, 142 and n, 143n, 144n, 145, 147n, 149 and n, 150n, 151n, 152n, 154n, 156n
Mahāyāna 25-28, 37, 62, 117, 122-23, 126-27, 131-32, 134-35, 137, 141-43, 144 and n, 146, 147 and n, 148-49, 151-52, 154, 156n; *sūtra* 129, 144n; *sūtra saṅgraha* 127n, 135n, 136n, 142n, 156n
Mahendra (Indra) 74n, 75, 76n
Maheśvara (Śiva) 94, 127, 146
Maihar copper plate 106n
Mahiddi 144n
Mahīśāsaka 123n
Mahīṣāsura 103; **mardinī* 101, 108
Mahīyava Sāman 17
Maihar inscription 107n
Maitra, Sm. J. 1, 5, 94
Maity, S. K. 82 and n
Majjhimanikāya 130, 151
Majumdar, R. C. 13n
Majumdar, R. P. 1, 7-8, 81 and n
Makara 100; **vāhinī Gaṅgā* 88
Mālādhara 156n
Malalasekera 72, 131n, 145n, 147n, 148n, 153n, 155n, 157n
Māmakā 124
Manasā 125
Mānava Sāman 20
Mandara 76n
Manda (Rajshahi District) 99-100
Maṅgalā 113
Maṇibhadra 73-74
Maṇipadmā 128
Manoratha 107n
Mantrayāna 28, 123
Manu 20, 66 and n, 68n, 71, 115-16
Manusmṛti 7, 65, 68, 77, 79
Manuṣyadharman 79
Māra 129, 152-54, 156-57
Māragīyava Sāman 19
Māricī 155
Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa 65n
Mārtaṇḍa 5, 96n, 97n, 100; Bhairava 5, 94-95, 96 and n, 97 and n, 98-100
Marut (Vāyu) 77 and n, 80
Mathurā 90
Mātīposaka Jātaka
Matsyanagara 49
Matsya Purāṇa 66-67, 69, 94-95
Maukhari dynasty 91, 105
Māyā (Buddha's mother) 132, 134
McGovern 135n, 136n
Meghavarṇa 90
Meru 136
Micchā ājīva 23
Mihirakula 98n
Mihiralaṣkmī 5, 98
Mihira (Sūrya) 5, 98
Mihireśvara 5, 98 and n

- Milhakūpa* 150
Milindapañha 132
 Mirzapur (U. P.) 55
 Mishra, B. P. 1, 3-5, 7, 14
 Miśrakāvana 142n
 Miśra, Umeśa 119n
 Missakāvana 142n
 Mithilā 66, 108n, 113 and n, 114, 117-18
 Mitra 135n
 Mitra, Debala 104
 Mitra, R. L. 96n
 Mitra S. K. 3, 5
 Moggallāna 24
 Mucilinda (Mucalinda) 154
Mudrārākṣasa 54-55
Mukae-bi 33
 Mukunda 53
Mūlasarvāstivādinaya 137n
 Müller 140n
 Mumtaz 83
Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 68n
 Murray, Flower 18n
 Nadī (Vetaraṇī) 150
 Nāganikā 73
 Nagarī plates 107
 Nāgārjuna 63, 80
 Nāga clan 72, 127-28, 130, 153-54, 156
 Nagpur 1-2, 91
 Nahuṣa 75
 Nairṛta 77 and n, 143n
 Namuci 17-18, 156
 Nanaghat inscription 8, 73-74, 76
Nānanda Sāman 18
 Nanda 24
 Nandanavana 142n
 Nandin 88
Naṅguṭṭha Jātaka 145n
 Nanjio 35n, 37n, 38 and n, 135n
 Narasimha I 101, 103-05
 Narasimhagupta 87-88
 Narasimha (Viṣṇu) 107
 Naravāhana 79
 Nārāyaṇa 70, 110, 127, 135, 145-46, 147 and n
Nārāyaṇīya Tantra 96 and n
 Nasik *praśasti* 48n
 Neil 135n
 Nemindhara (Nimindhara), 136
 Nepal 29, 113, 132n
 Netṭabhañja II 105n
 New Delhi 102
 Neyali 107
Nihongi 36n, 37
 Nimindhara 136
 Nimmāṇarati-world 140, 143
Nirarbuda 151 and n
 Nirmāṇarati 140
 Nirmand (Kangra District) 98
 Nirṛta 80
 Nirṛti (Nairṛta) 77n
 Nirvāṇa 128
 Nobel 135n
Nyāyabhāṣya 57n
 Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika 58, 62, 64
 O-Bon festival 32
 Oḍra country 106n, 107
 Okuri-bi 33 and n, 34
 Omgodu 77
 Orissa 101, 104, 105n, 106-07, 109, 121n
 Pabbajjā 4, 39
 Pacceka-Brahmā 149n
 Paccekabuddha-yāna 122
Padma 151
 Padmapāṇi 127
Padma Purāṇa 107n
Paduma 151n
 Paithan 91
 Pajāpati 144 and n
Pañcagatidīpana 149n, 150
 Pañcāla 50
Pañcarakṣā 29
 Pañcaśikha 154-155
Pañcatantra 54n
Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa 7, 14 and n, 15-16, 18-19, 21



- Pāṇḍarā 124
 Pāṇḍava 49
 Pāṇḍukambalaśilā 147n
 Paṇi 15
 Panigrahi, K. C. 108n
 Pāṇini 78-80
 Panna (Bundelkhand) 99
 Parab, K. P. 53n, 54n
 Pārājikā 23
 Pāramitā 123
 Pāramitāyāna 123
 Paranimmitavasavatti-world 140, 143
 Paranirmitavaśavartī 140
Parāśarasmr̥ti 69
 Pāraskara 47 ; *Gr̥hyasūtra* 47
Parittā 25
 Pāruṣyaka 142n
 Paśupati 19, 46-49
 Pātāleśvara (Śiva) temple 103
 Pāṭaliputra 55
 Patañjali 80
Pātañjala-darśana 114
 Patāpana (Pratāpana) 149
 Paṭhavi 145
Pāṭika Sutta 24
Pāṭimokkha Sutta 42
 Paulastya 79
 Paurṇamāsa 4
Paurumudga Sāman 16
 Pavāraṇā 1, 4, 13-32, 39, 43-44, 50
Petavatthu 36, 139, 152n
 Phārusaka 142n
 Pikira 77
 Piṅgala (Kubera) 76
 Piṅgala (Surya's attendant) 99-100
 Piśāca 152
 Pischel 46
 Pitṛ 74-75
Pitṛmedha 7
 Pitṛpati (Yama) 77
 Poona 84n
 Poussin, La Vallée 152
 Prabhāvatī 84n
Prabodhacandrodaya 62n, 107n
 Prajāpati 7, 14, 17-18, 24-21, 144
Prajñāpārmitā 124
Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya Sūtra 28
Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra 26, 28
 Pratyeka-Brahmā 148n
 Pratyūṣas 100
 Pravāraṇa 35-36, 38
 Prayāga 113
 Pṛthvī 100, 145-46
 Pubbavideha 137 and n
Pūjāratnākara 114
 Pulastya 76
Puṇḍarīka 151n
 Punjab 98
 Punyajaneśvara 79
Puppharatta Jātaka 53n
 Purī 103, 105n, 106 and n, 107, 109n
 Pūrṇamāsī 113
 Puruṣottama 105n, 106 and n, 107n ;
 Jagannātha 101, 103, 104 and n,
 105, 106 and n, 107, 109n
 Pūṣan 13 and n
 Puṣyāmītra clan 84
 Puṣyāmītra Śuṅga 89
 Radhakrishnan, S. 57, 110n, 111n
 Ragā 157
 Rāghavabhaṭṭa 96
 Raghunandana Bhaṭṭacārya 106n,
 113-14
Raghuvamśa 77-78
 Rahasyu 19
 Rahder 135n
 Rāhu 129, 155
 Rājagaha, Rājagrha 50, 52
 Rajaguru, S. N. 108n
 Rājarāja 79
 Rājarāja I (E. Cālukya king) 107n
 Rajasthan 113
 Rajshahi District 99
 Rakkhasa 152
rakṣā-mantra 25
 Rāma 102

- Ramachandran, T. N. 109n
 Rāmānuja 57n, 110-11
Rāmāyaṇa 6, 75, 77
 Rāmeśvarasirīha 117-18
 Rameswaram 103
 Rao, T. A. Gopinatha 98n
Rāṣṭrapālāpariprechā 135n
Ratana Sutta 25
 Ratnagrha 90
 Ratnākara 113
 Ratnasambhava 38n, 124
Raurava 149 and n
Rāvaṇa 77
 Ravi (Sūrya) 94, 97 and n
 Raychaudhuri, H. C. 69, 110n
rddhi 23
 Regamy 135n
Rgveda 5, 7-8, 10-13, 15-16, 18-20, 22, 46, 106n, 135n
 Rhys Davids 50n, 135n
 Roruva (Raurava) 149 and n
 Roth 46
 Rudra 19 and n, 47, 53, 95
 Rudra-Śiva 5
Rudrayāmala 114
 Ruru 98
Ruru 149n
 Śabara rite 117
 Sadāmatta 156n
 Saddhā 147n
Saddharma-Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra 146
Saddhasmapuṇḍarika Sūtra 26-27, 66, 126-27, 130 and n, 133, 146, 156
Sāadhanamālā 29
 Sahakapati 148n
 Sahāmpati (Sahampati) 148
 Sahāpati 148n
 Saha, Sm. K. 1, 4, 39
 Sahasrākṣa (Indra) 78
 Śaiva marriage 115
Śākamasra Sāman 17
 Sakka, Sakra 73-75, 143-44, 146 and n, 147n, 153n, 154
 Śakti 117-18, 20
 Śakti-devatā (Mother goddess) 113
 Śaktinātha 117
 Śakti-pīṭha 113
Sakvarī Sāman 18
 Śākya 156
 Śākyamuni 37, 38n
 Śālagrāma (Viṣṇu) 120
 Sālāvṛkas 19
Śālmālīvana 150
Samādhirāja Sūtra 26
 Samantagandha (Vāyu) 146
Sāmaveda 7, 21
Sāmba Purāṇa 95
 Sambula 146n
Samghāta 149
 Saṁhāra 98
 Saṁkaṭā 113
 Samudragupta 78, 83-84, 86-90
 Samudrasena 98
Samvartta Sāman 18
Samvatsarapradīpa 114
Saṁyuttanikāya 129, 144, 147, 151
 Sanatkumāra (Sanaṅkumāra) 148
 Sanchi 90
Saṁjīva (hell) 149
Saṁjīva Jātaka 52
 Sankalia 5
 Śaṅkara 58n, 63
 Śaṅkara (Śiva) 47, 77n
 Śaṅkarācārya 114, 120
 Sāṅkhyā 59-60 ; *Kārikā* 60n ; *Sūtra* 60n
 Sāṅkhyāyana 47 ; *Gṛhyasūtra* 47
Sannyāsa (āśrama) 82, 85n
 Santusita (Santoṣita) 143
 Śāntideva 62
Śapha Sāman 14
Sārādātīlaka Tantra 95, 96n
 Saramā 15
 Sarasvatī 113, 127
 Sarkar, K. C. 99-100
Sarvadarśanasamgraha 62n

- Sarvasiddhāntasārasaṁgraha* 62n
Sarvāstivāda 123n, 134n
Śaśāṅka 3, 91, 92 and n, 93
Sastri, Ganapati 135n
Śātakarṣi (Gautamīputra) 48n
Śatakratu (Indra) 74
Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 15 and n, 16-17, 19-21, 67n, 68
Śatasahasrikāprajñāpāramitā 132
Śātavāhana dynasty 3, 73, 91 and n
Saubhara Sāman 14
Saumitra Sāman 19
Saundaryalaharī 120
Sauparṇa Sāman 15
Sauradharma 95
Saura Purāṇa 98
Sāvaka-yāna 122
Savitṛ 15
Sāvitṛī 113
Sāyaṇa 12 and n, 106n
Senart 133n, 135n
Segaki-ho 38n
Sengupta, Sm. S. 1-2, 4, 6, 8, 22, 31
Shāh Jahān 83
Sharma, R. S. 65n, 69
Shastri, G. D. 81
Śikhareśvara (Śiva) temple 105
Śikṣānanda 38
Śikṣāsamuccaya 136n, 138n, 144n
Silavanāga Jātaka 51n
Simhacalam 105
Sineru (Sumeru) 136-37, 139, 142
Singh, S. P. 1
Sinha 73n
Sircar, D. C. 1-6, 8-9, 52n, 67n, 68n, 72, 73n, 77n, 78n, 79n, 82n, 85n, 91, 93n, 97-98, 109n, 132n
Śirī 147n, 148
Śītalā 113
Śiva 5, 47, 55, 88 and n, 92, 94-95, 97 and n, 98 and n, 100, 103, 105-08, 116 and n, 117, 120, 142, 145-46
Śivacandra 118
Śivadatta 93n
Śiva-liṅga 98, 101-04, 108-09
Śivarātri 120
Śiva-Sūrya 109
Skanda 53, 145
Skandagupta 84-85, 87-89
Skanda Purāṇa 95, 103, 107n
Skandavarman II (Pallava) 77
Ślokavārttika 59 and n
Smith, V. A. 82, 83n, 92
Smṛtisāgara 114
Śobhaneśvara—inscription 108 ; temple 107
Sogandhika 151n
Soma 13, 18n, 20, 74-78, 144n, 145-46
Somadeva 54
Somanātha temple 107
Soma Sāman 20
Sorinshu 34n
Speyer 140n
Śrāvastī 24, 35, 55
Śrāyantiya Sāman 17
Śrī 111, 147n, 148
Śrīda 79
Śrīdatta 113
Śrīdharaṇarāta 105n
Śrī-Kālacakra 125
Srinivasachari, P. N. 110n
Srinivasachar, S. 110n
Śrīvaiṣṇavism 110-11
Srivastava, B. N. 92n
Sthāṇviśvara 91
Subhadrā 103
Subhakiṇṇa 139
Subrahma 149
Sudassana 136
Śuddhāsuddhīya Sāman 19
Śuddhāvāsa heaven 146
Sudhābhajana Jātaka 147n
Śūdra 65, 69-71, 114, 120
Suhma country 55
Suiko 36

- Sujhāna Sāman* 15
 Sukhāvati heaven 128, 133 and n
Sukhāvativyūha 128, 133
 Sumeru 136
 Sumitra 19
 Sunimmita (Sunirmitta) 143
 Suriya 129, 145
 Sūrya 5-6, 73-74, 77, 94-95, 97-99,
 108, 145-46 ; Nārāyaṇa 94, 108
 Susīma-devaputta 143n
Susīma Jātaka 51
Śuṣṇa 17
Suttanipāta 66, 151, 156
Suvarṇaprabhāsa Sūtra 156
 Suvarṇaretas 95
 Suyāma 143
 Suzuki 137n, 142n, 144n
Svalpākṣarī Prajñāpāramitā 28
 Svarbhānu 15, 20
 Tai-tsung 37
Taittirīya—Āraṇyaka 68, 78 ; *Brāh-*
maṇa 69 ; *Samhitā* 68n, 89n
 Takakusu 36n
 Tamluk, Tāmralipta 55
 Taṅgi 107
 Taṇhā 157
 Tantradhārī 117
 Tantranātha 117
Tantrarāja Tantra 119n
 Tantrayāna 28
Tapana 149
 Tārā 27, 113n, 119, 125
 Tārācaraṇa 117
 Tarkalankar 57n
Tarkarahasyadīpikā 60
 Tathāgata 124, 129, 133
Tattvārthādhipāyaka Sūtra 60n
Tattvasaṃgraha 62n
 Tāvatiṃsa-heaven 130, 132, 140, 142
 and n, 143, 147, 153n, 154
 Teṅgalai (Southern School) 111
 Ter 91
 Thakur, U. 108n, 112
 Thaplyal, K. K. 93n
 Tibet 29
Tiracchānavijjā 23
 Tirhut 113
 Tiṣya (Tissa) 148
 Tripurabhairavī 113
 Tripuruṣa 5
 Triratna 25
 Tryambaka (Śiva) 55
 Tryambakasakha 79
 Tusita heaven 132, 134, 140
 Tvaṣṭr 18 ; *Sāman* 18
 Ugratārā 113
 Ujjayinī 93n
 Umā 94
 Umāpati (Śiva) 94
 Umeśa Miśra 120n
 Unmatta-Bhairava 98
 Upasampadā 39-42
 Upavasatha 36
 Uposatha 4, 31, 39, 41, 42n
 Uppala 151n
 Urabon-e 34
Urabon 34n ; festival 36
 Urabon-no-matsuri 34
 Uruvupalli 77
 Uṣas 100
 Utkala, Utkaladeśa 107n, 113
Utpala 151
 Uttarakuru 137 and n
 Uttaraṇṇikā 55n
 Vācaspati-miśra 114
 Vaḍagalai (Northern School) 111
 Vahni (Agni) 77, 80 ; *Purāṇa* 77n
 Vaibhāṣika 60, 62
 Vaidya, P. L. 55n, 127n, 134n, 136n,
 142n, 143n, 155n
 Vaikhānasa 19
Vaikhānasa Sāman 19
 Vaimacitra (Vepacitti) 155
 Vairocana 124
 Vaiśravaṇa (Kubera) 72, 76n, 79, 143,
 146

- Vaiśya 65, 120
Vaitaraṇī 150
 Vaivasvata (Yama) 74
Vājasaneyi-saṁhitā 19n
Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā 133n
 Vajradhara 124, 153
 Vajradhara (Indra) 75
 Vajradhātviśvarī 124
 Vajrapāṇi 153 and n
 Vajrasattva 124
 Vajrasattvātmikā 124
 Vajravārāhī 124
 Vajrayāna 28, 122, 23 and n, 124-25
 Vajrayoginī 125
Vānaprastha (āśrama) 82, 85 and n, 86
 Varāha-Narasimha temple 105
 Vārāṇasī 14n
 Vāraṇāvata 48, 50
 Vardhamāna 117
Varṇodhāra Tantra 118
Vārśa Sāman 20
Varṣavalāhaka 144n
 Varuṇa 8, 13 and n, 73 and n, 74 and n, 75, 76 and n, 77-78, 80, 127, 143n, 144 and n, 146 ; *praghāśas* 43
 Vasantotsava 54
 Vāsava (Indra) 8, 73-74, 146n
 Vasiṣṭha 68n, 119
Vassavalāhaka 144
 Vassāvāsa 1, 4, 31, 36, 39, 42, 44
 Vassupanāyikā 43
 Vasubandhu 60
 Vāsudeva 70
 Vāsuki 54
 Vasumatī 146
Vātavalāhaka 144
 Vātsyāyana 57n, 81 and n
 Vāyu 13 and n, 77, 143n, 145-46
Vāyu-Purāṇa 65n
 Vedānta 57
 Vedāntavāgīśa 60n
 Vemacitrī 155
 Venhu (Viṣṇu) 145
 Vepacitti 129, 155
 Verma, O. P. 1-3, 6, 8
 Vessavaṇa (Vaiśravaṇa-Kubera) 72, 73n, 142
 Vaidyādhara 100, 113 ; *piṭaka* 28
 Vidyāpati 113
 Vijayā-daśamī 118
 Vimalā 113
 Vinataka 136
 Vināyaka (Gaṇeśa) 54
Vinaya Piṭaka 24n
 Vindhya hills 113
 Vindhyaśāsinī 55, 113
Vīṅka Sāman 19
 Virāṭanagara 49-50
 Viratha (son of Kaśyapa) 76, 78
 Virūḍhaka, Virūḥhaka 72-74, 142
 Virūpakkha, Virūpākṣa 72-74, 142
Viṣṇudharma 106n, 107n
Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra 67-68 and n
Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa 66, 73
 Viṣṇugupta 87-88
Viṣṇu Purāṇa 70, 105n
 Viṣṇu (Smṛtikāra) 68n
 Viṣṇu (Vāsudeva) 5-7, 15, 53, 70, 80, 86-87, 88 and n, 94, 103, 105n, 107-08, 111, 116, 120, 126, 145-46, 147n, 154 and n
Viśoviśīya Sāman 19
 Vissakamma, Viśvakarman 144
Visuddhimagga 27, 132, 134n, 138
 Viśvarūpa 15
 Vitteśa (Kubera) 77
 Vivāsvat 109
 Vizagapatam plates 107n
 Vṛndāvana 113
 Vṛśa Jāna 20
 Vṛtra 17-18
 Waddell 155 and n
 Wakan sansai zue 34n
 Waldschmidt, E. 135n, 144n, 147n

- Watters 86n
Wilson, H. H. 105n
Winternitz 24n, 25n, 35n, 52n, 72n, 80n, 90n, 126n, 127n, 128-29, 132n, 133n, 134n, 135n, 144n, 145n, 146n, 152n
Wogihara 138n, 143n
Woodroffe 118n, 119n
Wu-ti 37
Yājñavalkya 66 and n; *Smṛti* 65, 68-69
Yajñāyajñīya Sāman 15
Yakkha 130-31, 152-53, 155 and n, 156
Yakṣa 72-73, 75, 78-79, 155n, 156n
Yakṣarāṭ 79
Yakṣiṇī 155n
Yama 8, 20, 73, 74 and n, 75, 76 and n, 77-78, 80, 143n, 144n, 145-46, 152
Yama 140
Yāma Sāman 20
Yāma-world 143
Yameśvara temple 107
Yaśodhara 81
Yaśomitra 60
Yogācāra 41
Yogamāyā 113
Yogāmbara 132n
Yogasūtra 66
Yudhiṣṭhira 76n
Yugandhara 136

ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA

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|------|-----------------------|---|
| Page | 77, note 28, line 2.— | Read— <i>Nairṛta</i> |
| „ | 96, line 5.— | Read—cited by Rāghavabhaṭṭa in his commentary on the <i>Sāradātilaka Tantra</i> |
| „ | 103, line 16.— | Read—Caitanya |
| „ | 116, line 14.— | Read—Prajñā |
| „ | 124, line 12.— | Read—possesses |
| „ | 127, line 1.— | Read—Bodhisattva |
| „ | „ line 12.— | Read—Bodhisattva |
| „ | 128, line 20.— | Read—Bodhisattva |